DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 314 162 PS 018 455

TITLE Hearing on the Establishment of a National Policy on Children and Youth. Hearing before the Subcommittee on Human Resources of the Committee on Education and Labor. House of Representatives, One Hundredth Congress, First Session.

INSTITUTION Congress of the U.S., Washington, D.C. House Committee on Education and Labor.

PUB DATE 28 Jul 89

NOTE 106p.; Serial No. 101-36.

AVAILABLE FROM Superintendent of Documents, Congressional Sales Office, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402 (Stock No. 552-070-06859-7, $3.25).

PUB TYPE Legal/Legislative/Regulatory Materials (090)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS *Adolescents; *Child Advocacy; *Children; *Child Welfare; Civil Rights Legislation; Federal Government; *Federal Legislation; Hearings; *Public Policy

IDENTIFIERS Congress 101st

ABSTRACT

This report presents testimony given at a hearing concerning the establishment of a national policy on children and youth, the Young Americans Act. Under this act, there would be an Office for Children, Youth and Families at the federal level and in each of the 50 states. These offices would support local offices, coordinate programs which affect children, provide economic incentives, and establish an independent council on children, youth and families. Testimony focused on the following topics: personal experiences of youth in the social service network; contents of the proposed bill; the success of the Older Americans Act and its relationship to the Young Americans Act; the importance of the government in empowering youth; the benefits of the act for the nation; the importance of adequate funding; the role of community-based organizations in delivering services; the need to recognize and support ethnic diversity in developing policies; the demographics and characteristics of Hispanic youth; teen outreach; the need for a trust to serve poor and handicapped children; and suggestions for the improvement of the national youth policy. (RJC)

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HEARING ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL POLICY ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

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HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FIRST CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

HEARING HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC, JULY 28, 1989

Serial No. 101-36

Printed for the use of the Committee on Education and Labor

PS 018455

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
21-274 •. WASHINGTON : 1989

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HEARING ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL POLICY ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

FRIDAY, JULY 28, 1989

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES,
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:10 a.m., in Room 2261, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Dale E. Kildee [Chairman] presiding.

Members present: Representatives Kildee, Sawyer, Unsoeld, Poshard and Tauke.

Staff present: Susan Wilhelm, staff director; Carol Behrer, professional staff; and S. Jefferson McFarland, legislative counsel.

Chairman KILDEE. The Subcommittee on Human Resources meets this morning for a hearing on the establishment of a national policy on children and youth.

This issue was brought to the attention of the House of Representatives by the late Senator Claude Pepper, working with Congressman Joseph Kennedy of Massachusetts.

Mr. Pepper was a hero of mine. He was a hero of mine when I was in grade school. He certainly, more than anyone else, showed us that we could cross that intergenerational gap.

Claude Pepper was a doer. He was recognized for his advocacy of the elderly, but really his interest went way beyond that.

His concern for the elderly came from his interest in human dignity. He recognized that the government's role was to promote, protect, defend and enhance human dignity.

Because of that, when you look at his life history, you see it touched every aspect of human dignity from the very young to the very, very old.

In this subcommittee the needs of young children are recognized and addressed through Head Start, Follow Through and the Foster Grandparent Program.

Yet there is no national policy overlaying these and other Federal programs which recognizes these youth as important persons with needs and as national resources.

Claude Pepper saw the need to make a national commitment to our youth through the development of a national youth policy and to bring together the country's best and brightest at a White House conference to chart the course of national policy for decades to come.

We come together today to discuss the importance of such a policy, how it should be implemented and how it can be nurtured through events such as the White House conference.

I would like to call upon the ranking Republican member of the committee, Mr. Tauke, for an opening statement.

Mr. TAUKE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to commend you for calling this hearing today to explore the establishment of a national policy on children and youth.

If we have the faith in individuals that we all proclaim that we do, then it is critically important that we give every individual in this nation an opportunity to achieve all that they are able to achieve, and I believe that it is important that we develop government policies that empower individuals to be able to have great opportunity in their lives.

There are dozens of government programs that are designed to serve the needs of children and youth and there are as many government agencies running these programs.

I might add very emphatically, Mr. Chairman, that there seem to be almost as many congressional committees and subcommittees claiming jurisdiction over those programs and related issues.

Chairman KILDEE. Moreso recently, we have discovered.

Mr. TAUKE. I think that is a good sign, though, and it suggests that the issues are becoming more popular.

As a result, however, we sometimes do not have the comprehensive look at policy that is necessary, and I think if we take a little time to look at the overall policies that we have in the nation that affect children and youth that it will be a very helpful exercise for us.

It is important, therefore, to occasionally examine how all of these programs fit together, identify gaps in services and explore ways to improve coordination and effectiveness of public and private efforts.

We have that opportunity today and I am looking forward to the testimony of our witnesses.

Thank you.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you. Are there any other opening statements? Mr. Sawyer?

Mr. SAWYER. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for calling this hearing. It is a long overdue undertaking. As we enter the third century of this nation, it is enormously important that we make the kind of plans necessary to support all our youth. After all, we hope that they will grow into the backbone of our nation.

Most people here probably do not realize that we are approaching the two hundredth anniversary of the census of the nation. It has struck me that, although we use the figures from the census to formulate policy across the whole spectrum of the nation's public enterprises, we do not have all of the detailed figures we need to know about our nation's youth, particularly those youth who we could characterize as youth at risk.

Mr. Chairman, we cannot afford to lose even one youth who has the potential to become a contributing adult to our country. I suggest, therefore, that one of the elements we ought to consider when building a national youth policy is how we can best measure the number of youths who need our help.

Chairman KILDEE. Mr. Poshard?

Mr. POSHARD. Mr. Chairman, I congratulate you, first of all, for holding this hearing.

I had a unique opportunity during the last year on two occasions to spend time with Claude Pepper. One was down in Atlanta, at the Democratic National Convention. I also sat across the aisle from Mr. Pepper on the train going down to Greenbrier for our Democratic caucus meeting.

Expecting that he would be filled with conversation on older Americans and those traditional constituency groups that he had always represented so eloquently, much of our conversation, in fact, involved youth and children and his great concern for the youth of our nation.

I know I represent a district that has one of the highest rates of teenage pregnancy in the United States. It has one of the highest rates of unemployment in the United States.

It greatly concerns me that the future of our children needs to be looked at more emphatically than we are now at the Federal level.

I think the Young Americans Act, attempts to start, at the Federal level, some policy-making toward assistance to our families, our youngsters.

It just concerns me and I am hopeful that out of all of this we will come to a consensus of agreement on a way we can act at the Federal level, to help our children who need our help so desperately in these areas of great concern.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Glenn Poshard follows:]

HON. GLENN POSHARD'S OPENING STATEMENT

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES

HEARING ON A NATIONAL POLICY ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

July 28, 1989

MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE, I AM GLAD THAT OUR SUBCOMMITTEE IS FOCUSING ON AN ISSUE AS IMPORTANT AS THE FUTURE OF OUR NATION'S YOUTH. I BELIEVE THAT THE FORMULATION OF A NATIONAL POLICY ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH IS VITAL TO THE FUTURE OF THE UNITED STATES. THE USE OF DRUGS, TEENAGE PREGNANCY, GANG VIOLENCE, AND TEENAGE SUICIDE ARE ALL SYMPTOMS -- SYMPTOMS OF UNDERLYING PROBLEMS, AND SYMPTOMS THAT OUR YOUNG PEOPLE NEED DIRECTION AND MEANING IN THEIR LIVES.

CLAUDE PEPPER UNDERSTOOD THIS. SINCE I FIRST MET HIM LAST YEAR, I HAVE BEEN IMPRESSED WITH HIS UNDERSTANDING OF THE NEEDS OF THE AMERICA PEOPLE, YOUNG AND OLD. HIS LEGISLATIVE EFFORTS FOR SENIORS GAINED HIM NATIONAL RECOGNITION, BUT HE WAS EQUALLY CONCERNED WITH OUR YOUNG PEOPLE. HIS PROPOSED "YOUNG AMERICANS ACT" IS A FIRM STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. I PARTICULARLY COMMEND HIS CONCEPT OF A WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON YOUNG AMERICANS AND THE BILL'S ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES, UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.

OUR NATION'S YOUNG PEOPLE NEED AND FULLY DESERVE OUR HELP. I BELIEVE THAT THIS HEARING TODAY IS A SIGN THAT THIS SUBCOMMITTEE IS COMMITTED TO FINDING SOLUTION TO SOME OF THE PROBLEMS WHICH OUR YOUTH FACE, AND I COMMEND CHAIRMAN KILDEE FOR HIS LEADERSHIP ON THIS MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE.

WHEN I SPEAK TO GROUPS OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN MY SOUTHERN ILLINOIS DISTRICT, ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT MESSAGES I TRY TO CONVEY TO THEM IS THAT DREAMS AND DRUGS DON'T MIX. I FEEL VERY STRONGLY THAT EACH AND EVERY ONE OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE MUST BE ENCOURAGED TO STAY AWAY FROM THE DRUGS WHICH ARE POLLUTING THE MINDS OF SO MANY OF OUR KIDS.

I THINK THIS HEARING INDICATES THE COMMITMENT OF THIS SUBCOMMITTEE TO OUR NATION'S FUTURE -- TO OUR CHILDREN -- AND I LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING THE TESTIMONY FROM TODAY'S WITNESSES.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you. Mrs. Unsoeld?

Mrs. UNSOELD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for calling this hearing and Mr. Kennedy's role in this.

It seems to me it is particularly indicative of the importance of this issue that we have chosen this week to do it.

All week the House has been trying to implement a national defense policy through the appropriation process and our voting on the floor, but to me there is nothing more vital to our national defense than how we rear our children.

It is so important that this week we are also looking at our youth.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you very much.

Our first witness this morning is our colleague from the state of Massachusetts, the Honorable Joseph P. Kennedy II.

Congressman Kennedy is an original sponsor of the Young Americans Act and had, I know, discussed this bill on many occasions with Senator Pepper.

I am pleased that Congressman Kennedy is taking up a leadership position on this bill on behalf of Mr. Pepper.

They both have shown in their careers, one a little longer than the other, but they have both shown in their careers that they believe that government's role is to promote, protect, defend and enhance human dignity.

We welcome both your presence here this morning and your willingness to take the leadership role in this bill.

Your prepared statement will be made a part of the record. If you wish to summarize, you may do so.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JOSEPH P. KENNEDY II, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS

Mr. KENNEDY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Let me, first of all, just thank you for the opportunity to be here today and to speak on this bill.

The fact is that without your leadership this process would not have been allowed to move forward. You have done a tremendous job on the legislation that you have already filed in terms of providing for decent and affordable child care in this country, something that I think all the people in this room are supportive of your efforts.

Considering the implications it has for our country in general, your legislation needs to be acted on this year, because there are just too many families that are suffering and who require the assistance of their government to be able to have the kind of child care that they need for their children.

Some of the statistics that Mr. Poshard and others have witnessed in their own communities—I mean, whether it is in my community or in any of the rest around our country are compelling: dropout rates are over fifty percent for children attending inner city public schools.

I know Mr. Sawyer represents an area that has been hit hard by the dropout rates. Then there is the indicator for teenage pregnan-

cy rates—forty percent of all the young girls at the age of fourteen today are going to become pregnant by the time they reach the age of twenty-one, fifty percent of all of the young black women in our country becoming pregnant by the time they reach the age of twenty, twenty-six percent of the children growing up in America today growing up in poverty, the highest in the history of our nation, and the incredible statistics with regard to the kind of death rates we have amongst young babies in our country.

These statistics all tell a story, a story that I think Claude Pepper was very concerned about. You were right to mention Senator Pepper's interest in this bill.

Senator Pepper took a tremendous interest in our nation's senior citizens, but he never forgot all of the young people of our country.

I think what is important about this legislation today is that it really is modeled after, I think, Senator Pepper's greatest achievement, which was the Older Americans Act.

With that act we saw a model program that started with just $6 million a few years ago—$6 million dollars that program began with.

It has grown into perhaps the most effective—I am sure, Mr. Tauke, even in your district you hear about the benefits of Meals on Wheels, you hear about the benefits of so many of the nutrition programs and the capability of people to get together and to deal with their needs. That is what this legislation is really about.

It is modeled after the Older Americans Act and I think will, in fact, go a long way toward bringing some real focus and attention on the tremendous problems that young people are facing.

You know back in 1965 the Older Americans Act began with a vision that went far beyond the modest $6 million budget that would realistically allow.

The vision to improve the lot of our nation's senior citizens served as an impetus for people at the local level to design innovative programs to reach out to seniors—the Meals on Wheels, the transportation services, adult day care and home renovation programs.

The Older Americans Act has extended to over a billion dollars a year in an endeavor which has remarkably improved the nutrition, health and general well-being of our nation's elderly.

It is exactly that kind of spirit, the decisions coming from the bottom up, that allows this bill to move forward today.

We can make the Younger Americans Act successful if we model it after the legislation that Claude Pepper passed in the Older Americans Act.

Under this act we envision an Office for Children, Youth and Families to be set up at the Federal level and in each of the fifty states.

The state offices will then establish local youth agencies similar to the area Agencies on Aging throughout the country.

These local youth agencies will determine what programs would best suit their needs, ranging from health and mental health services, drug prevention programs, teenage pregnancy prevention programs, recreational and volunteer opportunities, housing and shelter assistance, protective services. And with the assistance that is provided through the state and Federal funds the local agencies

will get to hire the folks that they need to get these programs off the ground.

The creation of plans is about one-half of what the legislation is all about. The other half is to improve the coordination of current programs which affect children.

The Administration of Children, Youth and Families will become the hub connecting all Federal programs affecting children to insure that we are efficiently moving forward.

The Administration of Children, Youth and Families will also spur state and local action by providing economic incentives through grants.

States would be required to provide a fifteen percent match for direct services and a twenty-five percent match for planning and administration.

The Young Americans Act will also establish an independent Council on Children, Youth and Families comprised of fifteen members whose role will be to objectively review and evaluate all Federal policies and programs affecting children.

Mr. Chairman, as you know, the Young Americans Act was extremely important to Senator Pepper. He greatly wanted the opportunity to appear before this committee and to urge action on this legislation.

I am sure he would have been pleased with the lead editorial in today's "Washington Post," which stated that there is no greater social task "than to improve the lot of our children."

Again, I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank all of the members of this committee.

The fact is that we know the story of Claude Pepper on his death bed, on the last day of his life, calling up Richard Darman and asking for assistance for the long-term care of our nation's senior citizens.

This is an individual who dedicated his entire life to public service, who was attacked viciously throughout his career for standing up for the poorest of the poor, for standing up for the people without a voice in this country. It seems that if we can get some legislation established now in his memory expanding the basic model of allowing the people of our country to make their own decisions—I remember someone once said to me that the only problems that occur with a democracy can be solved through more democracy.

It seems that that was really the kind of spirit that Claude Pepper believed in. It is the kind of spirit that I think is embodied in this legislation.

With this subcommittee's action I am hopeful that we can move legislation that will deal with the needs of our nation's young people, will re-establish them as an important group for the future of our country and important enough that our nation's Federal Government, state governments and local governments pay attention to such a tremendous group of people that can add so much to our society.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Joseph P. Kennedy II, follows:]

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CONGRESSMAN JOSEPH P. KENNEDY II
REMARKS BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR
"THE YOUNG AMERICANS ACT"
JULY 28, 1989

First of all let me thank the distinguished Chairman of this Committee, Dale Kildee, for allowing me the opportunity to speak today. Mr. Chairman, your efforts are responsible for the significant headway we've made on a number of children's issues. Under your leadership, this committee has built a record which clearly reflects your commitment to improving the future of American children.

There are a number of important legislative initiatives targeted at improving the lot of our children today -- child care legislation -- introduced by the distinguished Chairman of this committee -- child protection legislation, child health care legislation -- these are all initiatives that are greatly needed to address the urgent needs of our children. We are the only industrialized nation in the world in which children are the poorest age group -- 13 million children, over 1 in five live in poverty. On any given night, 100,000 children have no home. There is a 50% drop-out rate in our inner city high schools. One half of our black females become pregnant before they reach the age of twenty. We're all familiar with these statistics and there is legislation targeted at each and everyone of these problems. But I feel legislation is also needed that will define desirable goals for our children and then spur local action to reach these goals. This legislation will outline a national youth policy for America.

The "Young Americans Act" introduced by our beloved colleague, the late honorable Claude Pepper, is the youth policy this country needs. The goals of the "Young Americans Act" are lofty but its methods are down-to-earth as evidenced by its overwhelmingly successful parent, the Older Americans Act. Passed in 1965, the Older Americans Act began with a vision that went far beyond what its modest $6 million budget would realistically allow. But the vision to improve the lot of our elderly served as the impetus for people at the local level to design innovative programs to reach out to seniors -- meals-on wheels,

transportation services, adult day-care, home renovation programs -- and the Older Americans Act has expanded to a $1 billion endeavor which has remarkably improved the nutrition, health and general well-being of our elderly. And it is exactly this kind of spirit -- decisions coming from the bottom-up -- from the people who provide the hands-on care -- which will prove to be successful for the "Young Americans Act".

Under this legislation we envision, like the Older Americans Act, an Office of Children, Youth and Families to be set up at the federal level and each of the 50 states. The state offices will then establish local youth agencies, similar to the Area Agencies on Aging, throughout the country. These local youth agencies will determine what programs would best suit their needs ranging from -- health and mental health services, teen pregnancy prevention, recreational and volunteer opportunities, housing and shelter assistance, protective services -- and with the assistance that is provided from state and federal funds, the local agencies will then get hire the folks to get these programs off the ground.

The creation of plans is one-half of what this legislation is all about, the other half is to improve coordination of current programs which affect children. The Administration of Children, Youth and Families will become the hub connecting all federal programs affecting children to ensure that we are efficiently moving forward. The Administration of Children, Youth and Families will also spur state and local action by providing economic incentives through grants. States would be required to provide a 15% match for direct services and a 25% match for planning and administration.

The "Young Americans Act" will also establish an independent Council on Children, Youth and Families comprised of 15 members whose role is to objectively review and evaluate all federal policies and programs affecting children.

Mr. Chairman, as you know, the "Young Americans Act was extremely important to Senator Pepper. He greatly wanted the chance to appear before this Committee to urge action on his legislation. I'm sure he would have been pleased with the lead editorial in the Washington Post today, which stated that "there is not greater social task" than to improve the lot of our children. Again, thank you, Mr. Chairman-- I look forward to working with you and the members on this committee to do whatever is necessary to get the "Young Americans Act" through Congress and on the President's desk this year.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you very much, Mr. Kennedy. I appreciate your testimony and appreciate especially your willingness to take a leadership position on this bill, because this bill, I think, is something that we want to work on.

One of the provisions of the bill calls for a White House conference on youth.

How important a role do you think that White House conference could play in focusing our attention on the needs of youth?

Mr. KENNEDY. I think that, you know, there are many White House conferences and therefore you might chalk this up to just being another one that gets a quick headline.

That is not exactly what we have in mind. We think that this could be a tremendous tool for our nation's policy makers, to be able to establish the real needs of young people in our society.

I think most people would agree that the same kind of policy statement and the kind of oversight that the equivalent group which looks out for our nation's senior citizens has had a tremendous impact on our nation's senior policies.

This can be the kind of organization which can address the tremendous problems with regard to young people in America today, everything from poverty rates to drug addiction to the kinds of difficulties in employment that young people face, to, I think, a general sense of despair.

In our country I think we have a terrible notion about the young people between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five, that the only thing they can do is consume, that they cannot become productive human beings, that somehow they cannot hold decent jobs, that they are all somehow involved in some sort of drug abuse. They are just written off in our country.

I think in many ways it tends to reconfirm all of these terrible perceptions when we do not take into account that these people, if given an opportunity, as Mr. Tauke said, can grow into their full human potential.

We need to have the focus of this country being brought to bear on programs affecting young people. That is what that White House conference can accomplish.

So I think it is a very important initiative. I would hope that President Bush would welcome the opportunity to have a national youth policy established and I think that the conference can move forward with his blessing and with the blessing of the Congress to establish a good, solid youth policy for our country's future.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you very much. Mr. Tauke?

Mr. TAUKE. No questions.

Chairman KILDEE. Mr. Sawyer?

Mr. SAWYER. No questions.

Chairman KILDEE. Mr. Poshard?

Mr. POSHARD. No questions.

Chairman KILDEE. Mrs. Unsoeld?

Mrs. UNSOELD. Good job.

Mr. KENNEDY. Thank you. Well, can we just bang it through right now? Do you want to make a motion?

[Laughter.]

Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

Chairman KILDEE. Our first panel will consist of two youth witnesses. Before I introduce them I want to thank the Child Welfare League of America and the National Network of Runaway and Youth Services for their assistance in identifying and making these fine young people available to the subcommittee.

I strongly believe that involving youth in decisions that affect their lives not only serves to empower them but also produces much better decisions.

Lisa Nichols is a participant in the independent living program operated by the Lawrence Hall Youth Services Agency in Chicago, Illinois. She also works in that agency's recreational therapy program.

Lisa participates in the Child Welfare League's Youth in Care Network and attends Northeastern University, where she is an honor student.

Jennifer Kneeland has worked in the Youth Participation Unit of Aunt Martha's Youth Services Agency in Park Forest, Illinois since her sophomore year in high school. Currently she serves as Youth Coordinator of that unit and as a board member of the Illinois Collaboration on Youth and as Vice Chair of the National Network of Runaway and Youth Services.

I want to extend a warm welcome to both of you. If you would come forward, please.

STATEMENT OF LISA NICHOLS, CHICAGO YOUTH IN CARE NETWORK

Ms. NICHOLS. Mr. Chairman, members of the subcommittee and Congressman Kennedy, my name is Lisa Nichols and I am here today representing the Chicago Youth in Care Network.

First I would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak to you about services for young people. The services that I am going to talk about have a very personal meaning for me.

When I was twelve years old I was placed in the system and it was very hard for me at first because I am a biracial child and my case worker turned a blind eye to my feelings and he only looked at my color. That put me through a cultural dilemma because it was hard. Although it helped me with later interactions, it was just very difficult.

In that time, within seven years I was in eleven placements including runaways and breaking into empty apartment buildings to sleep. That was not good, because nobody was there for me when I needed them.

With that, systems are messed up when you are in placement. From seventh grade to my second year of high school I was in nine different schools. I have had workers tell me that I would not make it through high school. I proved them wrong because it was important to me to do that.

I am very nervous, so if I do not sound like I know what I am talking about, it is with feeling, but I am nervous.

The first part of the services I want to focus on is temporary care, which includes shelters and immediate interventions.

All of the shelters are crowded. Youth have nowhere to go. The systems are backed up.

The employers of these systems more often than not take a nonchalant attitude because they know that in a short time the people who are there will be moving on.

At one shelter I was told how to run away because I was scared. One of the workers told me how to sneak out the back stairs and just say I was going to the store.

The journey goes on as I moved to long-term placement. My question is, why are thirteen- and fourteen-year-olds and eleven-year-olds placed with eighteen- and nineteen-year-olds and expected to function on the same levels, and character traits are just thrown together, so someone coming from one environment is thrown with another person with a totally different environment. Their growth process slows down.

Right now I am in Independent Living, a supervised independent program. This is the last step on the ladder. I have made it this far and I have overcome a lot of obstacles, but there have been kids who have not. They just fell through the cracks of society and something was not there for them, but they will be back.

It is estimated that thirty thousand children are in foster care. People that I have talked to and myself feel that we are powerless and unable to control where we go and what happens in our lives.

In a study I was looking at, in the adults in California prisons sixty-nine percent of them had been in foster care, so they do come back.

I am in the Youth in Care Network, as they said, and we focus on youth helping youth, so we can feel empowered because that is real important, because so many decisions affect us that people we do not even know make for us and later on we have to live with the decisions they made, but it was not by our choice.

In the Youth in Care Network we focus on increasing the leadership of our peers and further communication and decision making skills so we can cut down the pregnancy of teenage mothers and dropout rates of school people, and we also create a network within Chicago for ourselves.

People say that we do not need any more bureaucracy, but for Youth in Care bureaucracies are our family, you know.

There is a major problem, though—they do not communicate with each other. There is something missing. The school systems do not communicate with the home, medical does not communicate—it is inconsistent.

There are stories where people's medical records, they are not there, they are backed up, and then their services are neglected.

Why shouldn't youth have dental check-ups regularly? Why shouldn't they be able to go to a school for just eight years or four years instead of nine and ten different schools at a time?

I have seen youth who have been to so many schools they could have finished their four years of high school, but they do not even have three credits totaled up because they do not transfer them.

Then at that time they are like, "I am not going anymore. I do not want to go because nothing finishes." Something will be started but it is never finished. That is inconsistent.

Although the United States is the richest country in the world and we have the highest standard of living, we do not have a na-

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tional policy for youth. We need one because there is a lot of youth out there who would be affected by it.

This hearing brings us closer to achieving secure passage of the Young Americans Act.

My question is, how many more steps have to be taken? In 1965 the Older Americans Act became law. That was almost two decades ago. The passage of that law improved dramatically the status of older Americans.

Youth status needs to be improved dramatically. In 1987 the Young Americans Act was first introduced to Congress and in October of 1988, when Congress adjourned, the Young Americans Act had ninety-two co-sponsors in the House and sixteen in the Senate, but no actions were taken. Why?

In March 1989 the bill was reintroduced with changes. Again, I ask the question, how many steps must be taken and how long will it take?

By the time the bill is passed we could already be using the Older Americans Act.

[Laughter.]

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Lisa Nichols follows:]

National Youth Network
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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HEARING REGARDING

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL POLICY ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

JULY 28, 1989

PRESENTED BY

LISA NICHOLS, CHICAGO YOUTH IN CARE NETWORK

Mr. Chairman, members of the Subcommittee, Congressman Kennedy, my name is Lisa Nichols and I am here today representing the Chicago "Youth In Care Network". I'll explain more about that but first I'd like to thank you for this opportunity to speak before the subcommittee about services for young people in this country.

The services that I am going to talk about have a very personal meaning for me. I am a 19 year old bi-racial young adult. I entered the "system" when I was 12. I was removed from my home and placed in a foster home. Then I was returned to my home. Then I was replaced in foster care. Then I went to another foster home. From there I was hospitalized. After that I went to a short term group home, then a long term group home, and now I live in a supervised independent living situation while I attend a university (where I'm studying social work). In seven years, I lived in eight different placements (not counting returns home or the number of time I ran away). I was first living in a predominantly white setting. Although this new interaction with a new environmental system influenced my level of coping with further interactions, I was going through a cultural dilemma. By my state worker turning a blind eye to my feelings, and only seeing my color, he denied the core of my identity at that time. Now I am glad to be aware of my ethnic background, and proud of all my people. But again it was a difficult situation for a 13-year old to deal with. Where was somebody when I needed them to advocate for me? Nobody asked me.

Temporary care was ok., but in too many aspects it uproots all of the systems that children may be used to. There's no one there to help transitions and keep things consistent. Shelters are too crowded, the time spent there is longer than expected due to back-ups. The employees more than not take a nonchalant attitude because they know that in a short time people will be moving on. One staff told me how to run away from a shelter by sneaking down the back stairs. She said if I was caught I should just tell people I was going to the store.

The journey goes on as I move up another step in the child care system. Long term placement in a group home had many positive as well as negative attributes. The age differences in a group home is a major issue. Why are 12 and 13 year old children put in environments with 17 and 18 year olds and expected to function on the same levels? I also feel that conflicting character traits being clashed together can slow down our positive growth process. One's dignity can just evaporate in a short time. However, with good staff these things were dealt with. There are only a few of those real good ones too, compared to all of the children who need them.

The next transition directed me to I.L.A. (Independent Living), a

supervised independent living program. This program is the final step on this system's ladder, and I have made it this far, with great accomplishments and overcoming obstacles. There have been kids who haven't. They just fall through the cracks of society. But they will be back. It is estimated that 300,000 children and youth are in foster care. I have found that youth in care feel powerless and unable to control where and with whom they live. This leads to low self-esteem, which often carries over into adulthood. I have known kids who have run away, gotten discharged from good placements and have wound up in detention centers, in jail, or in a coffin. Some of these kids were my friends. A recent study shows that out of all of the adults in California prisons, 69% of those have been in foster care.

At the present time I am in a youth-in-care network sponsored by the Child Welfare League of America. The purpose of our network is to create peer support programs for youth-in-care, in order to increase their leadership qualities, as well as communication, and decision-making skills; most of all, to help kids help each other to feel empowered. We believe that this project will help youth-in-care complete their education, acquire skills for employment,while at the same time decrease the high numbers of teen age pregnancies and dropout percentages. Our network is also a benefit because as we move into adulthood we are creating a network of support for ourselves in Chicago. Why isn't there some kind of effort for creating networks on a national level?

Although the United States may be considered the richest country in the world, with the highest standard of living, it cannot be said to have one of the most enlightened policies, or, in fact any national policy toward children. The Soviet Union and Israel are outstanding, they have a relatively clear conviction about children being their future, and they follow that conviction by investing in the nurturing of their children to a far greater degree than do many western nations.

In the United States our policies are like a roller coaster. We have some excellent things and some things that are very poor. There seems to be confusion and ambivalence about youth or, at least youth of the poor. Children in general do not have high priority as compared with adults' and children's services lag behind those that exist for adults.

The rights of children are not clearly spelled out in our laws, and in many areas the youth seem to have no rights.

A nation's priorities can often get in the way of a sound national policy for children. In the United States there are long waiting lists for child guidance clinics. It is difficult and expensive to find an opening in a treatment center for emotionally disturbed children, especially if the child happens to be disturbed and receiving public aid. Day care,is in very

short supply; especially if the parent happens to be an unmarried, minority, teenage mother. Almost all services are over burdened and the answer to the question, "why is this so?" is that we cannot afford it. But we can afford expensive wars, space shots to Mars, huge subsidies for agriculture and multi-billion dollar highway systems. It is not a question of "can't afford," it is a question of priorities.

The care and protection a child will receive varies widely in the United States depending upon where he/she lives. One state may spend 20 times more per capita for child welfare services than another. One state may have poor services and another of equal wealth, excellent services. Even more disturbing, services may vary within a state.

This hearing brings us one step closer to achieving the goal of securing passage of the Young Americans Act. My question is how many more steps have to be taken? In 1965 the Older Americans Act became law, that was more than two decades ago. And from what I understand, that law dramatically improved the status of older Americans. Well, the Young Americans Act could dramatically improve the status of youth.

In 1987, the Young Americans Act was introduced to Congress. In October 1988 when Congress adjourned, the Young Americans Act had 92 co-sponsors in the House and 16 in the Senate, but no action has been taken on the bill. Why? In March 1989 the bill was reintroduced with changes. Again, I ask the question, "How many steps must be taken and how long will it take?" By the time the bill is passed, the youth of today will be using the Older Americans Act.

Chairman KILDEE. You got our attention with that last sentence. Very good, very good. Thank you very much, Lisa. I appreciate your testimony.

I think you have presented us a challenge, which I appreciate very much.

Jennifer?

STATEMENT OF JENNIFER KNEELAND, NATIONAL NETWORK OF RUNAWAY AND YOUTH SERVICES, INC.

Ms. KNEELAND. Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, I would first like to say that I truly appreciate this time you have given me here to speak today.

As you know, I am the Vice Chair of the Board of Directors of the National Network of Runaway Youth Services.

The National Network has prepared a written testimony, and as a board member I would like to request that you accept this testimony into the record at this time.

Chairman KILDEE. Without objection, it will be included in the record.

Ms. KNEELAND. There is a problem when dealing with youth today, and I believe much of the problem has to deal with the focus of society.

I guess the best example I could give you—if a youth or a person starts his career and the career is a successful one, and my definition or society's definition of "successful" has to deal with either politics or business, and then it goes on.

They keep on getting patted on the back for getting a master's or a Ph.D. or for joining the yacht club or for buying a boat or having a plane.

Society pats them on the back and says, "You are doing a good job."

My question is, how come youth and how come people that help youth are not patted on the back when they do a good job? How come helping another human being is not as important as business and politics?

There is another problem I see, and that is that many of us are expected to become mature and responsible adults the minute we hit the age of eighteen or twenty-one.

We automatically have this say in the decisions that affect our lives, but this quite difficult for those of us who have never experienced true responsibility or security, or some of us who do not know the meaning of love, respect and faith.

With this, I feel the time is now that we the people here today in this room begin steps to work toward the increase of awareness of society of the importance of young people, and I think we could do this with the national youth policy.

One might ask, what is the benefit for this country of having such a policy?

My answer comes in two parts. First, there is the belief of a national youth policy and then there is the action of a national youth policy.

I find that the Federal Government must take the leading step in recognizing youth as a valuable resource, because it is a sense of security and pride for us.

There are many youth who do not find the protection within their family or friends. I feel it is only right that they can look to the government of the United States and know that they are needed and respected for the people who they are now and not who they are going to be.

Then there is the benefit of action. This is where I will use the word empowerment, because empowerment to me—my definition of empowerment is a bringing out. It is the bringing out of thoughts and ideas and the special gifts and talents we all have as individuals.

For a lot of us these gifts and talents and thoughts are hidden for one reason or another, whether it is abuse, neglect or lack of security.

So to empower someone is to give them responsibility, education and trust. I want to clarify what I say about youth. I want to say that we must empower all youth of all races, of all sexes and all socioeconomic statuses.

We must be willing to empower our youth so that when they do reach the age of eighteen that they do have the capabilities of being responsible and mature adults.

We must give them the opportunities within their communities to make them feel that they are important and needed.

The most valuable knowledge is that youth are a resource now and not only tomorrow. We can start now by, for example, electing youth to different boards of directors, not only in the social services but on school boards, city councils—how about businesses that design products that teenagers use, or an advisory board to Congress?

We must involve them in other participation activities. I know at Aunt Martha's we have an acting group, we have a newspaper, we have an aerospace club and we also leave open the possibility of forming a club if you get five people together that want to form a club—all they have to do is go to the director and say, "I want to form this club because I am interested in it," and they can have this club that they want.

We have to give them this opportunity and that takes money and security and support.

Today we have to teach youth that they do have a say in the decisions that affect their lives and we also have to back this up with Federal legislation.

So it is up to you leaders to choose whether or not you want to hold the youth in your hands and guide them and set them down gently so they do have a safe landing.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Jennifer Kneeland follows:]

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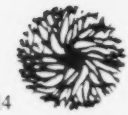

TESTIMONY

OF THE

NATIONAL NETWORK OF
RUNAWAY AND YOUTH SERVICES

FOR THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HEARING

ON

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL POLICY ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

JULY 28, 1989

A national youth policy needs to be developed. The National Network of Runaway and Youth Services (NNRYS), an advocate for runaway and homeless youth, continues to work to make this a reality. However, despite formal and informal networking, the coalitions and working groups of national organizations, a plethora of reports, and greater sophistication and innovation in the community-based services provided to children, youth, and their families, the efforts of the National Network and other organizations throughout the country have not created a unified vision of what we want for our young people. Federal leadership is needed. We have neither the time nor resources to support fragmented efforts.

Most adults look back on their adolescence with a sweet nostalgia. Although many admit to not wanting to be kids again, we revel in memories of our wonder years -- an awkward, yet powerful time of exploration and mastery. However, things have changed for many young people growing up today. In some areas, paper routes from bicycles have been replaced by crack routes. Young girls set aside their dolls at early ages, as they struggle to raise real babies; the babies' fathers too often have neither the skills, income, or maturity to help raise a family. Instead of jokes centered around the "kissing disease" of mononucleosis, today's youth face possible infection from an array of sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS. Increasingly, a youngster's "first kiss" may come from an adult, who shatters any belief that the world is a safe place for children.

There are other indicators that the notion of wonder years does not apply for many of America's young people:

- One in four children in America are born into poverty (American Public Welfare Association).
- Over 2.2 million child abuse reports were filed in 1988. The national rate for child abuse and neglect continues to increase (National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse, 1989). Between 1982 and 1987, it increased 69.2% (American Humane Association, 1989).
- Youth involved in delinquent activities have been subjected to significantly higher rates of child abuse than the general youth population (National Council on Crime and Delinquency, 1984). One study indicated that a history of abuse and/or family violence was the most significant variable in predicting membership in a delinquent group (Lewis, et al., 1987)
- Homicide is the second leading cause of death for 15-24 year olds in the U.S., accounting for the deaths of 5,552

young people in this age range in 1986 (National Center for Health Statistics, 1988).

- Youth aged 12-19 were victims of violent crimes at twice the rate for adults over age 20 (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1986).

- Suicide is the third leading cause of death for 15-24 year olds. The suicide rate among this age group increased 40% between 1970 and 1980; the suicide rate for the remainder of the population remained stable over this period (Centers for Disease Control, 1986).

- At least one million teenagers run away from home each year, often to escape physical or sexual abuse, parental substance abuse, or other family problems (Family and Youth Services Bureau, OHDS).

- As many as 300,000 young people are living away from their families, without adult support or guidance -- on the streets or moving from "friend" to "friend" (NNRYS).

- A study of emergency shelters for youth in Massachusetts indicated that the young people in residence averaged 6 different out-of-home placements during one year. Further, children removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect before age 13 averaged 11 moves per year. Only 5% of the children studied remained in a stable placement for the year preceeding the study, and 65% sought emergency shelter up to 5 times (The Greater Boston Adolescent Emergency Network, 1985).

- Approximately one in four teenagers leaves high school before receiving a diploma (Ford Foundation Project on Social Welfare and the American Future).

- Jobs in future decades will demand greater technical competence and worker flexibility -- not just one set of skills acquired early that will last throughout one's career (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1989).

- Thirteen percent of U.S. high school graduates fail to reach reading and writing competence beyond the sixth-grade level. A study of young adults found that three out of five 20 year olds could not read a map or add up their lunch bill (National Collaboration for Youth).

- One fourth of all sexually active teenagers will become infected with a sexually transmitted disease before graduating from high school (National Institutes on Allergies and Infectious Disease Study Group, 1980).

- More than one million U.S. teenagers become pregnant each year (Children's Defense Fund).

- Fully one in five of all AIDS cases is concentrated among young adults in their twenties (Centers for Disease Control, 1989). Given the long incubation period of the virus, it can be assumed that most of these young men and women were infected as teenagers.

- Ninety-two percent of the high school class of 1987 had begun drinking before graduation; 36% of that class began drinking in high school, while 56% began drinking in the 6th-9th grades (Johnston, O'Malley, & Bachman, 1988).

- Children of racial and ethnic minorities are disproportionately at risk for many of the problems cited above while facing a myriad of barriers to quality programs and services.

The Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development of the Carnegie Corporation recently released a report that detailed some of the costs to society when we ignore the problems young people face or rely quick-fix remedies:

- Each year's class of school dropouts will, over their lifetimes, cost the nation about $260 billion in lost earnings and foregone taxes (Catterall, 1987).

- Unemployment rates for high school dropouts more than double those of graduates. Each added year of secondary education reduces the probability of public welfare dependency by 35% (Ford Foundation Project on Social Welfare and the American Future).

- In 1987 more than $19 billion was spent in the U.S. on payments for income maintenance, health care, and nutrition to support families begun by teenagers (Center for Population Options).

- Of those teens who give birth, 46% will receive public assistance within four years; 73% of unmarried teens will be on welfare within four years (Children's Defense Fund).

- Alcohol and drug abuse in the U.S. cost over $136 billion in 1980 in reduced productivity, treatment, crime, and related costs. Additionally, researchers believe that drug use in early adolescence is a critical factor in predicting long-term substance abuse problems (Harwood, Napolitano, Kristiansen, & Collins, 1980).

Statistics like those just cited have become a litany for those adults fearful for the future of the nation's young; they are recited at community meetings, at conferences, and at congressional hearings. However, the best studies and good intentions alone can not change things for this and future generations of children. Challenges such as these must be met by national unity -- unity in commitment to our youth and unity in collaborating on structures and programs that will ensure youth the opportunity to grow as contributing members of their communities. Federal leadership in the formulation and adoption of a national youth policy is a necessary step in this process.

The National Network of Runaway and Youth Services (NNRYS) is preparing for its 15th Anniversary as an advocate for those young people who are at greatest risk for growing up isolated from their families, schools, and communities -- runaway and homeless youth. As a national association, the National Network represents over 900 community-based, youth-serving agencies across the country. These agencies act as bridges back into the community for youth through street outreach programs, crisis shelter services, longer-term group homes, and transitional living projects for older teens.

The National Network of Runaway and Youth Services has long recognized the need for a national youth policy. In 1985, the Johnson Foundation invited the National Network to cosponsor a Wingspread Conference, "Toward A National Youth Policy," in Racine, Wisconsin. In December of that year, organizations gathered and drafted statements that were later incorporated into legislation, The Young Americans Act, championed by the late Representative Claude Pepper. Wingspread participants included youth, the Child Welfare League of America, the National Council of Churches, the Children's Defense Fund, the National PTA, the National Youth Employment Coalition, the Association of Junior Leagues, the National Assembly, the National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Services Organizations, and many others.

The Young Americans Act (H.R. 1492) embodies the spirit of the Wingspread Conference and incorporates key elements needed to establish national unity in commitment and action for our young people. First, it provides a values statement on which a national policy can be based. The statement begins, "Children and youth are inherently our most valuable resource."

The National Network believes that circumstances of birth should not affect access to a safe home environment, quality education, the guidance and encouragement each young person needs to successfully move into adulthood, and full enjoyment of community life and individual responsibility. In addition, youth must have every opportunity to participate in decisions that affect their lives, including the formulation of national policies, as a right and as part of learning to make decisions as adults and as citizens. The Young Americans Act supports these beliefs.

Second, it creates structures that are needed to implement a national policy -- structures that facilitate comprehensive service delivery and encourage collaboration by public and private entities. In addition to formally establishing the Administration of Children, Youth, and Families (ACYF), it creates a Federal Council on Children, Youth, and Families that will advise the President and Congress on the special needs of younger Americans.

Third, the Young Americans Act provides federal support while allowing states and communities flexibility in addressing local challenges. To this end, it authorizes grants to states to help provide programs for children, youth, and families -- coordinated programs that can help bridge gaps in services. It also recognizes that most young people are not ready to assume full adult responsibilities simply because they have celebrated their 18th birthday; it allows older youth, through the age of 21, to receive necessary services that will ensure later self-sufficiency.

Fourth, the Act once more emphasizes the value of our youth and the importance of including wide representation as national strategies are outlined through establishing a White House Conference on Youth to be held in 1990.

The National Network of Runaway and Youth Services wants all children to enjoy years of wonder, enriched by and contributing to their families and communities. If we really believe that children are our most valuable resource, the development of a national youth policy is critical. Enactment of legislation such as the Young Americans Act is the necessary first step.

NATIONAL NETWORK OF RUNAWAY AND YOUTH SERVICES
Symposium 1989

RESOLUTIONS

The National Network of Runaway and Youth Services is a national organization whose members have determined that its purpose is to develop our nation's capacity to increase, insure, and promote the personal, social, economic, educational, and legal options, and resources available to runaway and homeless youth and other at-risk youth, their families, and their communities.

The National Network's membership is comprised of individuals, organizations and associations who provide and facilitate services for runaway, homeless and troubled youth. These members share a philosophical commitment to expanding meaningful alternatives available for youth and their families.

At its annual Symposium, February 5-9, 1989, in Washington, DC, Network members adopted the resolutions contained in this booklet. The majority of the resolutions address public polity issues related to youth. Others are concerned with Network organizational structures.

The National Board of Directors, Regional and State Networks will develop work plans for implementation of the goals outlined in the resolutions. We invite all youth advocates to join us in these efforts and at our 1990 Symposium.

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NATIONAL NETWORK OF RUNAWAY AND YOUTH SERVICES, INC. STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

The National Network of Runaway and Youth Services, Inc. is a membership organization of over 700 youth serving agencies. In addition, our membership consists of individuals and associations which provide and facilitate services for runaway, homeless and economically displaced youth.

Functioning as an organization since 1974, the National Network works to empower youth and their families. The Network's mission and yearly direction remain a grassroots decision process, and membership continues to grow.

The National Network's membership has determined that its mission and purpose is to develop our nation's capacity to increase, ensure, and promote the personal, social, economic, educational and legal options and resources available to runaway, homeless and other youth in crisis, their families and their communities.

The Network's members gather annually to form action plans on specific issues affecting young people and their families. These action plans are formalized and approved at our annual Symposium as resolutions with specific time lines for implementation.

Underlying both the mission statement and the resolutions, the National Network operates from a set of guiding principles which direct our internal operation as well as provide the methodology for accomplishing its goals.

THE NATIONAL NETWORK'S GUIDING PRINCIPLES

COMMUNICATION NETWORKING

Local coalitions, state and regional networks have direct input into national organizations that allow for representative, broadbased perspectives.

A functional communication network calls for reciprocal relationships with ideas flowing freely to all levels, allowing the ideas to change and be modified as new and critical information is received.

Coordination of services, information, expertise and support at all levels facilitates the development of effective policies and services.

ADVOCACY

Non-profit organizations working on behalf of young people and their families have a responsibility to represent their constituents accurately in a non-exploitive manner, while effectively educating policy makers and the public to the issues necessary for positive policy development.

This communication process with policy makers should not be inhibited by restrictions, rules, regulations, or legislation.

YOUTH PARTICIPATION

The empowerment of young people as equal participants with adults fosters positive self-esteem and mutual respect.

The participation of young people in the planning, implementing and mobilizing of community support for programs that affect their lives and those of their families is essential to their individual success and that of the programs working with them.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Organizational procedures as well as public policy should reflect positive efforts to promote the equality of all people, including youth.

Civil Rights and affirmative action legislation now in place should be vigorously enforced and broadened to include groups presently excluded, such as children and youth, and persons with AIDS.

Programs serving youth and their families should accommodate differences and encourage access to and participation by racial, ethnic, cultural and sexual minorities.

VOLUNTEERS

The value of one's contributions to society is not measured in dollars but rather in one's dedication, commitment and actions. Volunteers, who give of themselves freely expand, enhance and promote the existence of necessary support for youth and their families.

Volunteers should be acknowledged, encouraged and recognized for their valuable contribution to social services programs.

RESOLUTIONS

(1) NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY

(Action)

WHEREAS the National Network is a national organization whose purpose, as determined by its members, is to develop our nation's capacity to increase, ensure and promote the personal, social, economic, educational, legal options and resources available to runaway, homeless and other at-risk youth, their families and their communities, and

WHEREAS the National Network has a firm commitment to initiate and sponsor the development of a comprehensive National Youth Policy, and

WHEREAS the members of the National Network have adopted the following philosophical basis for a National Youth Policy:

> Children and youth are inherently our most valuable resource. Their nurturance, welfare, protection, healthy development and positive role in society are essential to the nation. They deserve love, respect and guidance, as well as good health, shelter, food, education, productive work and preparation for responsible participation in community life. It is essential that they have increasing opportunities to participate in the decisions that affect their lives. The family is the primary caregiver and the source of social learning which must be supported and strengthened. However, when families are unable to ensure the satisfaction of these needs, it is society's responsibility to assist them.

At minimum, all youth need and deserve access to:

1. the best possible physical and mental health
2. adequate and safe physical shelter
3. the highest quality of educational opportunity
4. effective training, apprenticeship and productive employment
5. the widest range of civic, cultural, and recreational activities which promote self-esteem, and a sense of community
6. comprehensive community services which are efficient, coordinated, and readily available
7. genuine participation in decisions concerning the planning and managing of their lives.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the National Network supports the development of a comprehensive planning process for services that are coordinated at the local, state, and national levels for high risk youth.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the National Network shall initiate, participate and monitor local, state and national efforts that lead toward creation and coordination of effective comprehensive services for youth and their families.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Network strongly supports the development of an equal partnership between youth and adults in the shaping and implementation of plans directed towards and affecting the lives of youth in our nation.

(2) YOUNG AMERICANS ACT

(Action)

WHEREAS a Young Americans Act was introduced during the 100th Congress and is based on the philosophical statement of care for youth that was developed at a conference hosted by the National Network, and

WHEREAS the Young Americans Act has not commanded the attention of the Congressional leadership, has not received strong bipartisan sponsorship, and was not marked or reported to the floor of either the House or the Senate of the 100th Congress, and

WHEREAS the Young Americans Act contains a planning process for states to institute comprehensive provisions for services to children and youth, legislates an Administration for Children, Youth and Families, and calls for a White House Conference on Young Americans,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that it be a priority that the National Network have a lead role to continue liaison with the supporters of the Young Americans Act, supporters of the Older Americans Act and others who have led the way in improving the well-being of those discriminated against because of age.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that states are strongly encouraged to work with state legislatures for the enactment of similar legislation that will address the special needs of youth.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Network work with individuals, local and regional members to enhance advocacy efforts towards public support of a Young Americans Act.

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Chairman KILDEE. Thank you very much, Jennifer, and thank you, Lisa.

Just sit there for a moment. We might have some questions for you, Lisa.

We really appreciate your testimony. It was excellent.

I taught school for ten years. I tell people that in real life I was a schoolteacher. I have taken this long sabbatical in politics now for twenty-five years, but I taught school.

One thing I learned while I taught school is that I could and did learn from my students. I think that is very important, that older people open themselves up to many of the insights and immediate experience, that close experience that you have, and I learned a great deal from my students.

I am the father of three teenagers—sixteen, seventeen and nineteen. I learn from them.

I can recall, as a matter of fact, that one of my other heroes, Phil Hart, at the Democratic convention in 1968 took a very strong position against the war in Vietnam.

He and I counseled, and he said that he had learned and arrived at that decision through his children. I think he certainly arrived at the right decision, in my opinion, there, but we really should open ourselves up and learn from people like yourselves, and you have already helped in that education this morning, so I deeply appreciate that.

Could I ask just one question and then I will turn to the other members of the panel.

Could you provide us some examples of how to better involve youth in the policies and programs that affect them?

We have some policies and we have some programs, not a coordinated policy yet, but we have some programs.

How can we best involve young people like yourselves or even younger people in these policies and programs? Do you have any examples or ideas on that?

Ms. NICHOLS. Well, just like the Chicago Network—our agents had to seek through private funds just so we could get started.

Networks of youth to help youth would be just a big start, but if it was on a Federal level it could have a bigger start, a bigger way to get started.

Chairman KILDEE. Jennifer?

Ms. KNEELAND. I think what is important is that I cannot tell you now that this program and this program and this thing and this thing is going to work in this community, because every community has a different need.

Maybe in the center of Chicago, where there is lots of gang violence, you need ex-gang members to come and have early intervention with the children in that school system and tell them gang prevention, but maybe in a south suburb somewhere you need just different, you know, different programs that enhance self-confidence.

So what I can tell you is that you need to look to youth within each community and ask them what they need and what their needs are and look to the social services already existing and ask them how they can expand and maybe develop some kind of advisory board that is combined of youth throughout the country and

have different ideas, just like generating idea sessions of what would be good.

When you do make policy decisions, consult youth and find out our ideas, because a program is no good if the idea is not from the youth.

I mean, some are good—programs are most successful when they are made up from youth.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you very much. Mr. Tauke?

Mr. TAUKE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I want to commend both of you for your testimony, and since empowerment is one of my favorite words, too, I appreciated your comments.

Let me ask perhaps what is a pretty basic question, but I am not sure that I know the answer to it.

If we develop a policy for youth in the nation, what group are we looking at, defined by age or any other characteristics?

How would you define the group that we should be focusing on?

Ms. KNEELAND. I think when you are actually designing a policy it has to do with how you design it.

If you design it for white, middle class youth it is going to be for white, middle class youth.

If you design it for children it is going to be for children.

But I see it for youth up to the age of twenty-one, because, I think, even though we are allowed to vote at the age of eighteen, I feel as a nineteen-year-old who just turned nineteen kind of "I can vote now?"

So I think the policy has to go all the way up to twenty-one years old and it has to provide the basic security for young people, for children, it also has to provide programs and support from the government, so I think it is a wide variety of issues.

I think the Young Americans Act is a very excellent written document of a youth policy that I support.

Mr. TAUKE. Lisa, do you have any comments?

Ms. NICHOLS. No.

Mr. TAUKE. If we were going to take an area that we want to target first—obviously you always have to have priorities—where do we start? Do we start by trying to improve the education system, by trying to find job opportunities for young people, by attempting to focus first on finding perhaps what we might call an alternative family structure for those young people who need some kind of family or community structure? Do we start by fighting the scourge of drugs?

What would you say is the single best thing or single best goal to establish, what would that be?

Ms. NICHOLS. I feel that if you started with networking. As she said, in each community there is a difference.

If there was a network for each community, that community could focus on their immediate needs first and put it into perspective.

Ms. KNEELAND. I think that is a real tough question, but I think all the issues that you brought up are all very important and I think the first priority is to provide money to existing programs so they can either add on to their agencies or organizations or add on to their existing program.

Also, I think that one priority is to have youth involved. It is to get them within the think tanks, and that is your number one priority.

So it is not—I mean, education and shelter, those are all very important, but I feel the number one importance is to get youth involved, and you have to do that through existing programs.

Mr. TAUKE. Do you think the existing programs are working? Are they understood by young people? Are young people aware of the existing programs? If somebody has a problem, do they know where to go, or are the existing programs in a sense failing to connect with the young people who are supposed to be served by them?

I know it is tough to give a generalization, but I am just curious from your experience.

Ms. KNEELAND. I know that in my own experience the reason we have a tough time connecting, I think the main reason is because they are seen for drug addicts, for people who have really messed up lives. This has been my experience. I think even my parents still have hesitancy when I am working at Aunt Martha's because they—it has been drilled into their heads that a youth-serving agency is for youth that are screwed up.

So I think this is where the national youth policy has to come into effect, because this is where we can say that helping youth is for helping all youth and not helping youth that are just messed up and have problems.

We can help youth, you know, just within the community. We can help youth, you know, whatever. We can get them involved. We can have youth that are not messed up helping youth that are messed up—you know, youth helping youth, youth empowering youth.

Mr. TAUKE. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you very much. Mr. Kennedy, do you have questions for the witnesses?

Mr. KENNEDY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate it.

Lisa, I was just interested in the testimony you provided us with regard to how age groups get mixed up in programs for youth.

Can you tell me, what kind of program was that—what was your experience? That was not a good situation?

Ms. NICHOLS. Within group homes and shelters I have noticed where thirteen-year-olds and twelve-year-olds, there is such a mixed age difference. Say the rules of the house or things like that, they are all focused not for individuals but just general.

So say a thirteen-year-old cannot go to the store at seven o'clock. Neither can an eighteen-year-old. What kind of independence when one is growing into something does that make an eighteen-year-old feel like when they have to do the same thing that a thirteen-year-old does?

Mr. KENNEDY. Your specific experience, however, was that this was something that would prevent—it perhaps would be a bad influence on the twelve- or thirteen-year-old and would be detrimental in terms of the overall growth of somebody who might be a little bit older.

Ms. NICHOLS. Right.

Mr. KENNEDY. If you just take that example as a general problem, it is something that we need to hear more about in this hearing this morning.

It is very difficult for us to actually implement a program that is going to make those changes at the local level. I mean, it is a long way from this hearing room to a halfway house in Chicago.

One of the items that I think Jennifer was touching upon—and I think Mr. Tauke, as well—is there has to be some notion of empowerment at the local level and what we had hoped, I think, with this bill is to be able to create these local youth policy centers throughout the country.

Rather than us mandating programs that come down from Washington, D.C. which you then either accept them or not, you would begin to take some of that initiative yourselves in determining what those kinds of youth policies ought to be at the local level.

Do you think that if that type of agency was set up in Chicago would you be willing to serve on a board and go to the meetings and help to define what kinds of policies we ought to have as a country?

Tell us a little bit about it, Jennifer.

Ms. KNEELAND. I think just the impact that I have seen youth have with the National Network on the board of directors—it is in the by-laws that there are two youth representative seats. There was one time when we actually had three youth representing the youth from throughout the country in the National Network.

Just what I see—like, I just envision it now—is that we literally, you know, raise issues with adults that they have never seen or maybe it kind of falls to the wayside, ideas and thoughts that they are so busy discussing one thing that we say, "Well, wait a minute, we have to still work on this issue. It is unresolved."

We also think of new things. It is like, they are so busy with, you know, the budgets and having to work on these issues that we as youth have that time to discuss what we can do and how we can get youth participation on the national level. We also have connections to do it.

So when you talk about, you know, ideas or getting youth involved in some kind of board within, like, a local city of Chicago or whatever local suburb of Chicago, it is really effective when we do have youth there developing ideas, because they are actually out there living the experience. They know what the problems are.

Lisa knows that youth fall to the wayside, where a lot of people do not know that. A lot of people think there are programs for each youth, but we find that youth do fall through the programs.

So Lisa would be excellent on a board or some kind of a committee to serve, because she would bring that idea of youth that fall through the cracks of the programs.

So I think it is a very empowering idea.

Mr. KENNEDY. I think both of you have done a tremendous job.

Lisa, I do not know how nervous you are but you have given excellent testimony. I think you, Jennifer, have a breadth of experience that is well beyond your years.

The fact is that we need to have young people like yourselves helping to define our country's policies and trying to make certain

that we do take into account the needs of various different communities.

I think your example of a youth gang in inner-city Chicago versus the needs of kids in a suburban Chicago community illustrates how needs are going to be very different.

To try to take those differences into account requires articulate individuals like yourselves with experience and motivation—to tackle problems like how it takes seven different high schools in order to get your high school diploma—the fact is, we need to have people with that kind of stick-to-it-iveness that are willing to go out and help us define what we ought to be doing.

The problems that young people face are second to none in our country. When we talk about all of these different groups, the fact is that young people are being hurt in America. It is great that we have people like you who are tremendous examples of how young people can make a difference.

We welcome your continued participation. I think you have done a great job here this morning.

Ms. NICHOLS. Thank you.

Ms. KNEELAND. Thank you.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you, Mr. Kennedy. Mr. Sawyer?

Mr. SAWYER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, Lisa, can we all have your permission to use that line about the Older Americans Act? I can envision every one of us using that in a speech between now and next fall.

Let me ask you just a very personal question, both of your. What are your ambitions? What do you want to do with your lives?

Ms. NICHOLS. Well, right now I am attending Northeastern. I am going to get my bachelor's from there in social work and I am not going to stop until I get my master's and put back into society what I got out.

Mr. SAWYER. Where do you intend to focus your work? Social work is such a broad field.

Ms. NICHOLS. Administration.

Mr. SAWYER. Jennifer?

Ms. KNEELAND. Gosh, that is a tough question.

Mr. SAWYER. It may not be a question that is possible to answer. The fact is that we ask young people to make those decisions sometimes even younger than that, well before they are capable of answering the question, but if you do not have an answer——

Ms. KNEELAND. Right now my ambition might sound a little bit, you know, outward.

My ambition now is not directed toward any specific goal—I mean, career.

My ambition now from past experience is that I am going through therapy to really reconnect with my body, mind and soul, and so that is my ambition now.

I know I will definitely be in the field of service, because I think service is a way, like Mr. Kildee was saying, to—even now, you know, you help and you get help. It is an even balance.

Right now my ambition is to reconnect with myself.

Mr. SAWYER. Both enormously worthwhile. The reason I ask is that you mentioned as you began your presentation about the

people who, in fact, are in the business of serving youth and those we hold out as heroes and what we define as success.

It was in this room, Mr. Chairman—I think it was the hearings both of you conducted with regard to runaway youth—where we heard the testimony of those who, in fact, had gone through the business of acquiring master's degrees in social work and who were working in settings for runaway youth who were seeking to get jobs for the kids who had come to them and wound up finding them jobs in fast food places that paid more than the salary they were able to earn as providers of those services with bachelor's and master's degrees.

We have heard in our full committee time and again about how by the middle of this next decade we will see half of the current cadre of teachers in this country having left the profession for one reason or another, through retirement or through changing career paths.

It seems to me that as we look to the needs that we face in shaping policy that can approach rural Iowa as well as it does urban Chicago and all of the different circumstances in between, you really build that kind of policy on people, the kind and quality of people that you can attract to the undertakings of serving specific populations—in this case youth.

I do not really have any more questions. I would like you to comment on that sort of thing, the numbers of your peers who are thinking in terms of the kinds of directions that represent opportunities to serve, to pay back those people who helped them by doing the same things for those who follow.

It is an extraordinary motive. It is the kind of thing that you are talking about. It is the kind of thing that our policy ought to be built around.

I welcome the chance to hear from either of you on that.

Ms. KNEELAND. What is really sad is that I see people that do go through the system or have been through some kind of emotional stress who do not turn around and serve.

In fact, it is often not—you hear statistics about people that have been abused turning around and abusing their own children.

It is just this cycle that continues on and on. I am a firm believer that the time is now to stop that cycle and give back to our country what it has given us.

Ms. NICHOLS. I agree.

Mr. SAWYER. Should career pathways be a part of youth policy? I mean, it does not deal directly with service to youth but it makes possible——

Ms. KNEELAND. Oh, definitely. I am sorry, I misunderstood your statement.

Definitely, it is very important that we—in fact, we are trying to start a program within our agency now that is going to be somewhat of a training center, so if you need to be trained in high school to be, you know, Red Cross or be certified in Reality Therapy, start now your career and see if you like it.

You know, start now in high school and go through a six-week career training and see what you feel you want to do.

I think it is very important that we help youth secure in their minds some kind of goal. I think that is very important.

Mr. SAWYER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you, Mr. Sawyer. Mrs. Unsoeld?

Mrs. UNSOELD. Do either of you or both of you have involved in your work where you have the opportunity to work with some younger youth? Lisa, do you want to——

Ms. NICHOLS. Twice a week, as Mr. Kildee said, I work in the therapeutic recreation department with my agency and I work with the younger girls and the younger boys. I like it a lot.

Mrs. UNSOELD. You also?

Ms. KNEELAND. I also—I am a Big Sister to children in foster care and I take them out and either go to the movies or museums or the zoo or amusement parks or just the park and give them that one-on-one attention and do different things that they so desperately need.

Mrs. UNSOELD. Were there any questions that were asked that you did not get a chance to answer that you would like to?

Ms. NICHOLS. No.

Ms. KNEELAND. No.

Mrs. UNSOELD. Are there any questions that we should have asked that we did not that you would like to respond to? Do you want one more shot at all of us before we lose the opportunity to learn from you? Go ahead.

Ms. KNEELAND. I just once again want to say thank you very much. I hope we together—all the people that made the effort to come here today, I truly appreciate their support and I truly appreciate the support of the committee and hopefully with some faith and a lot of work we can get a national policy passed.

Mrs. UNSOELD. Thank you very much.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you. I just want to say that you have been very, very helpful.

I particularly had asked that we have people of your age testify and you certainly have done an excellent job.

In the course of hearings we do keep a permanent record which is printed and kept in the Library of Congress. As a matter of fact, extra copies are kept buried in the mountains in Maryland in case we do not have the wisdom to keep the peace down here.

So someday hopefully this Congress will act properly on this. Historians will see that you played a role in this legislation, and I want to make sure also—and this is my commitment to you—when this record is printed up and bound that we will send you copies of that so you will have your own copy of that record.

Ms. NICHOLS. Thank you.

Chairman KILDEE. I really appreciate very much your testimony here this morning.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you very much.

Our second panel now will consist of three witnesses. For Mr. David Liederman, Co-Chair of Generations United we will have Joyce Strom as Mr. Liederman was unable to be here, an old friend of this committee, a young old friend of this committee, Mr. Ira M. Schwartz, Director of the Center for the Study of Youth Policy of the University of Michigan, where my son is studying at the present time—he is a sophomore at that great institution where I got my master's degree—and Jane L. Delgado, President and CEO

of the National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Services Organizations.

Your entire testimony will be made part of the record. You may summarize as you wish.

Joyce, do you wish to start?

STATEMENT OF JOYCE STROM, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, CHILD WELFARE LEAGUE OF AMERICA

Ms. STROM. Thank you. My name is Joyce Strom. I am speaking for David Liederman, who was fighting planes and weather in New York early this morning.

I said, "When you get up you never know what excitement the day will present."

I am Deputy Director of the Child Welfare League of America, which co-chairs the Generations United, which is a national coalition of intergenerational issues and programs.

Chairman Kildee, on behalf of Dan Thurz, President of the National Council on the Aging, the other co-chair of Generations United, thank you for holding this hearing and for inviting Generations United to testify.

As you remember, Mr. Chairman, it was nearly, I think, three years ago to the day that you helped launch Generations United by attending the opening press conference.

Since then we have grown to more than a hundred national organizations working together to make programs strong and appropriate for our people of all ages. Thank you.

We would also like to thank you, Mr. Kildee, for your work on behalf of all generations. We know that during the recent reauthorization of the Older Americans Act you were responsible for a new program for in-home services for the frail and elderly, and during the reauthorization of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act you worked on the transitional living program for homeless youth, and we want to thank you for that and for Head Start and for ABC and—you know, I could go on, but thank you for sitting there and watching out for us.

I am here today to speak on behalf of H.R. 1492, the Young Americans Act that Claude Pepper did introduce. I would also like to thank Joseph Kennedy for his testimony. He has worked closely with Senator Pepper, and we appreciate it greatly.

What we want to make sure happens today is that we say how important it is to get a coordinated plan for making this nation's children and youth—to give them an opportunity to be self-sufficient and to have productive lives.

You have heard the statistics, and I enter in the record several pages of them, which I know you know by heart, but it is serious, as everyone said. It is very, very critical that we get at the issues.

Childhood poverty now claims one of five children under six and that is higher than seven other industrial democracies, included the United Kingdom and West Germany, and yet we are the only one that does not have a unified national plan for children and national policy for children and youth. I think that that is where we have to start. Everything starts with a declaration, and I think it is high time we made one in this country.

We actually do strategic planning for other areas of critical importance. We have long-term plans for the military, where the Joint Chiefs of Staff advise the president at every turn. We enact highway bills that have long-term plans for our nation's highways.

It is critical that we also have a plan for young people and for children. If we do not, our economy will be in deep trouble. There are a lot of us who are getting closer and closer to the other end and we are going to need young people to be productive and to pay taxes so that we can all go to the beach.

[Laughter.]

H.R. 1492, as you know, was inspired by another act of Congress which worked so well for the elder generation, the Older Americans Act.

It has done a whole lot to get coordination going at the state and local level, to get public and private cooperation and to get private citizens involved. That is exactly what we want to do. It is not a mystery. It is not hard. It is simple and it is just time we did it.

It establishes the Administration on Children, Youth and Family. Under current law The ACYF could be reorganized out of existence if the Secretary of HHS chose to.

It seems to me that the people of the United States need to know that there is a Federal focal point for children in this government, just like there is for elderly. I mean, I just think it is amazing that we do not have something that is legislated.

We know that there are sixty Federal programs costing bout $30 billion that affect children and there is no Federal coordination mechanism, and that is also not really a model for what we tell states on how to make things work at that level.

Also, it would establish a permanent council on children, youth and families to advise the president and yourselves and make sure that we have youth in it.

We also are asking that there be an amendment, because there need to be ex officio members on the council, which I would certainly assume that Ira will bring up about juvenile justice of the appropriate cabinet secretaries and commissioners so that at the Federal level there is integration and conversation, you know, in the national council.

It also is a bill that provides local and state flexibility, and that is exactly what was expressed by the young people.

As Mr. Tauke said, you cannot pin people down. As you know, it just makes so much sense for getting to the state and local level, because it may change from community to community what the priority does.

This bill does that. It is not rigid and it is flexible. In fact, states already know that such a coordination and a looking at things needs to exist.

Nine have a state level task force and ten are doing a study on the coordination of children's services. Twenty-three states provide for interagency management and three have a department whose sole responsibility is children's matters.

So it is something the states are not fighting. They know, I think, leadership to support the action they are already taking makes sense.

In fact, in a recent issue from the U.S. Conference of Mayors they said that two-thirds of the cities surveyed were forming coalitions to study children's issues.

So it is happening out there and we need to cement it, coordinate it, learn from each other and do something about it.

It is important that we do not impose mandatory standards, that we do give the local flexibility that states need.

Another thing that it does that is really important is that it will lead to the development of a national policy for children and youth and, instead of providing every rigid framework, it does seek to involve people in it.

It calls for a White House conference in 1991 and if anyone wants to minimize the impact of just another meeting we should remember that the Medicare program was born out of a 1960 White Conference on aging, and it is important that people get together, especially with youth, and have such a national declaration.

It is also affordable. It is inspired by the Older Americans Act. It could be initiated for as little as $20 million, which gives states incentive for planning and getting key things started.

Another thing that you are going to hear from someone sooner or later is that "it is just another bureaucratic layer."

Well, we do it for the military and the highways. The National Governors Association and Conference of Mayors think it is a good idea and they are usually the first to tell you they do not like bureaucracy.

If it does add a layer of planning and coordination, then yippee. Even though it may be inconvenient for someone, for thousands of children, just like Lisa said, the bureaucracy is their parent for a period of time in their life. So they have got to do planning and coordination.

I do not think because we said everybody is doing it that there is a resistance to it and I think it is absolutely critical.

In conclusion, it is clear that the American public knows our children need help. Recent polls by Lou Harris and the American Association of AARP show that across the generational board Americans recognize children and youth as very vulnerable—but what is going on is a lot of wishing right now.

As a nation we wish our kids would grow up safely. We wish they would grow up strong and well. We wish they would get a good education and job. We wish they would have a better life. We have got a lot of official wish papers put out by the administration and all of us about kids in the year 2000.

Well, we kind of call that the Tinkerbell planning method. We can wish as hard as we want but, unless we make a declaration and put some effort behind it, by the year 2000 we are going to be sitting here having a hearing talking about why didn't we do something, why didn't we take a stand, why didn't we declare, why didn't we start it.

This bill may not be perfect. I mean, I know you have had imperfect bills before that you have passed and that you have had to work on. This may be true for this, but we will never get to the second step if we do not take the first step.

Now, we also know that children and youth are an invisible constituency. They do not vote. They get kissed but not acknowledged a lot, but we want you to know that this time they have got powerful friends.

This bill is being sponsored by Generations United. We have got over sixty members of national associations. I have attached this. This should make you feel very supported. We have attached the list in our testimony. They are going to hold their hands on this bill, the senior citizens of the United States, because they think it is important that we take a stand for young people.

So we are going to just be marching strong and we look forward to your support.

We thank you for your leadership. We thank you for listening to us. We intend to get this declaration for young people and for children this year.

[The prepared statement of David S. Liederman follows:]

generations united
a national coalition on intergenerational issues and programs

% CWLA, 440 First Street, NW, Suite 310, Washington, DC 20001-2085, (202) 638-2952

TESTIMONY OF

GENERATIONS UNITED: A NATIONAL COALITION ON INTERGENERATIONAL ISSUES AND PROGRAMS

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HEARING REGARDING

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL POLICY ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

JULY 28, 1989

PRESENTED BY

DAVID S. LIEDERMAN, CO CHAIR, GENERATIONS UNITED
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CHILD WELFARE LEAGUE OF AMERICA

generations united

a national coalition on intergenerational issues and programs

My name is David Liederman, and I am the Executive Director of the Child Welfare League of America and Co-chair of Generations United : A National Coalition on Intergenerational Issues and Programs. Chairman Kildee, on behalf of Dan Thursz, President of the National Council On The Aging, the other Co-chair of Generations United, thank you for holding this hearing and for inviting Generations United to testify this morning.

You may remember Mr. Chairman, that it was nearly three years ago today, to the day, that you helped us launch Generations United by attending our opening press conference. Since that day we have grown to include more than 100 national organizations all working together to promote policies and programs that will make life better for Americans of all ages.

Mr. Chairman, Generations United would like to thank you for your work on behalf of Americans of all ages. We know that during the recent reauthorization of the Older Americans Act that you were responsible for a new program for in home services for the frail elderly; and during the reauthorization of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act a very important new program, Transitional Living for Homeless Youth. We also want to thank you for your work on increasing the authorization level of Head Start by $147 million and for your leadership on the Act For Better Child Care. You are truly a friend of Generations United and the people of all ages who we represent.

I am here today to speak on behalf of H.R. 1492, the Young Americans Act, introduced by the late Senator Claude Pepper, a champion of America's senior citizens, and of America's children and youth as well.

I'd like to thank Congressman Joseph Kennedy for his testimony in support of H.R. 1492. Congressman Kennedy worked closely with Senator Pepper on a number of issues and admired him greatly, and we thank Congressman Kennedy for carrying on his legacy.

I am here today to tell you that we need H.R. 1492, the Young Americans Act, because we need a coordinated plan for making sure

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that this nation's children and youth have the opportunity to become independent, productive adults. You have already heard the statistics about how this nation's children and youth are at risk, and many are in trouble. I will cite just a few of them:

- In 1986, 2.2 million children were reported abused, and or neglected. That was an increase of 66% from 1980 to 1986.

- The General Accounting Office's (GAO) most recent estimate of the number of children of homeless families reveals that on a given night, approximately 68,000 children age 16 and under are homeless, with 52% of these age 5 or younger.

- Four of every ten young girls age 15-19 become pregnant. The great majority of young girls who give birth are unmarried, have not completed high school and have poor prospects for jobs that will pay enough to support a family.

- One in four youth entering high school will not finish. In fact a majority of 17 year old high school students do not have the reading and math skills they will need to successfully compete for jobs in the coming decades.

- More than one million youth run away from home annually. Of those, 200,000 resort to prostitution to survive.

The plight of our nation's children is worse today than in 1970. We've seen a fifty percent increase in drug and alcohol abuse. Rates for high school drop-outs are higher. The homicide statistics are chilling. In 1986, the last year for which we have reliable national data, four to five people under 18 were murdered per day. Equally chilling, three to four people under 18 were arrested for murder every day. Teenage suicide and unemployment are up precipitously and childhood poverty now claims one of five children under six, a proportion higher than that in seven other industrial democracies, including the United Kingdom and West Germany. Yet, we have no unified national plan or policy for our children and youth.

We do strategic planning for every other area of critical importance. We have long-term plans for the military, with the Joint Chiefs of Staff advising the President at every turn. We

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enact highway bills and have long term plans for our nation's highways, bridges and tunnels, because they provide the infrastructure for our cities.

Children are the infrastructure of this country, and we believe that it is vital that the nation have a plan for its children. In 1992 there will be three working people for every retired person in the U.S., as compared to 1950, when there were 17 workers for every retired person. By the year 2,000 the pool of young workers age 16 to 24 will shrink by almost 40 percent. If our diminishing numbers of children are not able to become self-sufficient adults, our economy won't be able to function. As the Committee for Economic Development wrote in 1987,

> This nation cannot continue to compete and prosper in the global arena when more than one-fifth of our children live in poverty and a third grow up in ignorance. And if the nation cannot compete, it cannot lead. If we continue to squander the talents of millions of our children, America will become a nation of limited human potential. It would be tragic if we allow this to happen. America must become a land of opportunity-for every child.

The business community now realizes the dire straits in which our children find themselves and it is high time that the Federal Government began to provide leadership for public and private sector partnerships at all levels to address the situation.

That is why we are so pleased with the Young Americans Act. It is the only piece of Federal legislation that places children, youth and their families on center stage before decision makers at the Federal and State levels. It acknowledges what the business community already knows; if you want to get somewhere, you've got to plan where you want to go and how to get there. The Young Americans Act uses this common business sense by setting a course and establishing a plan of action for our nation's children and youth.

HR 1492 was inspired by another act of Congress which has worked so well for an older generation---the Older Americans Act of 1965. The Older Americans Act has proven conclusively that when

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Federal, State and local efforts are coordinated and public/private cooperation encouraged, problems can be solved. Government, in partnership with private citizens made a difference for the elderly in 1965 through the Older Americans Act. We need to do the same for children and youth in 1989. The 101st Congress owes children and youth the same commitment it has already successfully made to older adults, who are also vulnerable because of their age.

The objectives of the Young Americans Act were initially proposed by the Wingspread Conference on a National Youth Policy held in 1985. Sponsored by the Wingspread Conference Center and the National Network on Runaway and Youth Services, the conference included participants from the Child Welfare League of America, the National PTA, the Association of Junior Leagues, the National Governor's Conference, the Children's Defense Fund, the Urban League, the National Assembly, the National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Services Organizations, the National Youth Employment Coalition, and many others, including youth participants. From that conference, an ongoing work-group was established, and met throughout 1986, dedicated to the goal of formalizing a national policy for children and youth. Each of the Wingspread work-group participants supported this goal from their own perspective, and all agreed that leadership from Congress would be crucial to success. Mr. Chairman, the co-sponsors of H.R. 1492 have provided an excellent legislative vehicle for that purpose.

I will summarize the main points of the bill for you. H.R. 1492 would:

It establishes in law the Administration on Children, Youth, and Families. As we understand, the Administration on Children, Youth, and Families (ACYF) currently exists only as an organizational entity within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Under current law, the Secretary of HHS can reorganize ACYF out of existence. Children, youth, and their families need to be assured that there is a focal point within the Federal government coordinating services to meet their needs in the same way that the Administration on Aging is created within HHS to address the needs of the elderly.

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According to the Congressional Research Service there are currently about 60 Federal programs costing about $30 Billion a year that affect children. These programs are administered by a host of different departments and agencies with no oversight or coordination among them.

The National Governors Association in its task force report on Children released in February calls on the federal government to develop a coherent national children's policy based on prevention and to streamline funding for children's programs, which frequently is convoluted and restrictive. According to the report:

> Frequently programs serving children are disjointed, piecemeal, and crisis-oriented, often because bureaucracies are working with limited resources and multiple demands.

HR 1492 establishes ACYF in law and gives it specific responsibilities for which it can be accountable to Congress. This safeguards existing programs administered by ACYF from being shifted to other organizational entities within HHS without Congressional approval. HR 1492 is the only legislative vehicle available to stop such plans should they be pursued.

The Young Americans Act also like the Older Americans Act establishes a Council on Children, Youth and Families to advise the President and the Congress on matters related to the special needs of young Americans. The Federal Council could be a follow up to the National Commission on Children which has outlined an ambitious agenda for itself but expires in 1990 long before it can possibly complete its work.

<u>HR 1492 provides State and local flexibility</u>. The Young Americans Act, suggests <u>how</u> States and communities plan; not <u>what</u> they plan.

Preliminary findings of a survey that we conducted at the Child Welfare League of America show that states have responded to the lack of federal leadership by initiating coordination efforts of their own. We found that:

- Nine states have a state level task force, commission or other public body specifically charged with coordinating childrens' services;
- Ten states have study groups on the coordination of childrens' services;
- Twenty-three states provide for interagency casemanagement or coordination of services to specific populations of children and youth; and
- Three states have a department whose sole responsibility is childrens' matters.

A recent report issued by the U.S. Conference of Mayors had similar findings, with more than two-thirds of the cities surveyed forming coalitions to study childrens' issues.

The Young Americans Act would support and encourage these state and local efforts by providing incentive grants to states that take steps to improve service delivery through planning and coordination. States qualify for funds by having an independent body reporting to the governor that includes representatives from state and community agencies serving children and youth, representatives of the legislature , the business community and youth themselves.

It is important to stress that HR 1492 does not impose mandatory standards on states or require them to adhere to any one plan for administering and improving services. There is no one best way to get multiple systems to work together on behalf of children. Each state has different strengths and challenges and will want to design its own plan for coordination. The main point is that every state needs to be supported in its efforts to coordinate services and assure that systems don't work at cross purposes.

In our conversations with public and voluntary agencies in every state we heard pleas for help. For example, states would find it useful for someone at the federal level to document and disseminate what is going on in each of the states so that they can exchange ideas, build on what is working and find out where

the problems are likely to occur. We at the Child Welfare League of America are attempting to do some of the documenting but we simply don't have the resources to do the in depth work that needs to be done and we certainly don't have the resources to disseminate the findings. This would be an appropriate task for ACYF under the Young Americans Act.

The Young Americans Act is comprehensive and will lead to the development of a national policy for our children and youth. As with the Older Americans Act, the Young Americans Act recognizes the need for a comprehensive approach to the needs of children and youth. HR 1492 calls for the coordination of Federal, State and community resources around the objectives of assisting children and youth to secure equal opportunity to full and free access to-

(1) the best possible physical and mental health;
(2) adequate and safe physical shelter;
(3) the highest quality of educational opportunity;
(4) effective training, apprenticeship, opportunities for community service and productive employment;
(5) the widest range of civic, cultural, and recreational activities which recognize young Americans as resources and promote self-esteem and a stake in their communities;
(6) comprehensive community services which are efficient, coordinated, and readily available; and
(7) genuine participation in decisions concerning the planning and managing of their lives.

It seeks youth development and positive outcomes for America's children, rather than simply providing fragmented remedies to treat problematic symptoms as they occur. In many of our current approaches, we are like people standing on the banks of a river trying to "save" children and youth who "drift" by with various problems, such as drug abuse, depression, poverty, delinquency, or school failure. As we extend them a pole or throw out a rope, some are indeed saved. But far too many are lost. While continuing these efforts, the Young Americans Act recognizes the need to "walk up river" and find the hole in the bridge (and the gaps in resources and services) that causes kids to fall in the river in the first place. By patching that hole (and filling those gaps), we will save far more lives.

7

It calls for a White House Conference on Young Americans. Patterned after the productive White House Conferences on Aging held each decade, a White House Conference on Young Americans is authorized by HR 1492 for 1991. While there are those who will minimize the impact of "just another meeting," we should remember that the Medicare program which so effectively serves this nation's elderly was born at just such a "meeting" held in 1960. The White House Conferences on Aging have been instrumental in formulating a strong national policy for older Americans and there is every reason to believe that a White House Conference on Young Americans could be just as productive.

It is affordable. While inspired by the Older American's Act of 1965, the Young Americans Act does not need to be funded at a level equal to the 1989 appropriation of the Older Americans Act. It could be initiated nationally for as little as $20 million. While participation is voluntary, all states and territories could initiate planning activities for about $15.9 million in Federal outlays; the Federal Council on Children, Youth and Families (patterned after the Federal Council on Aging) would be authorized at $200,000; and Federal program and project evaluations are authorized at $300,000. With a $20 million appropriation for its first year, that would still leave more than $3 million for initial Part B supportive service awards and the initiation of activity for the 1991 White House Conference on Young Americans. It will require an investment. But in wisely authorizing "such sums as are necessary" for State and local activities, it allows Congress to determine the level of investment each year, based on State and community progress. Since the Young Americans Act invests money early in young lives, it is sure to pay future dividends in increased productivity and self-sufficiency.

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion, it is clear that the American public knows our children need help. Recent polls done independently by Lou Harris and the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) show that across the generational board, Americans recognize children and youth as the most vulnerable segment of our population. That is good. But there is likewise a good deal of "wishing" going on. As a nation, we wish our kids would grow up safely. We wish they would grow up strong and well. We wish they would get a good education and good jobs. We wish their rates of poverty were lower. We wish for them an even

better life than what we have enjoyed.

The Administration and many of us in the public and private sectors have formally and officially 'wished' on paper that things will get better for our kids by the year 2000. That is known by some as the 'Tinkerbell' planning method. We can wish as hard as we like but if we do not put real efforts and real investments into this nation's young, in the year 2000, today's children will come up empty-handed and some other witness before some other subcommittee of the Congress will be relating how much worse things have become since 1989 for tomorrow's children.

Mr. Chairman, the Young Americans Act of 1989,HR 1492 provides a means for real effort and real investment. It is the only piece of legislation which will get us, as a nation, out of the business of 'wishing' and into the real work of developing comprehensive programs and policies for children, youth and their families.

Some people may ask how we intend to get this bill passed when the young people it is designed to serve cannot vote, cannot lobby and cannot run for office. Children may be an invisible constituency, but they are not without powerful friends. There is no better group in this country to advocate on behalf of children than our senior citizens, and they will be helping on this bill. HR 1492 is a top legislative priority of Generations United. In fact attached to my testimony is a list of 60 members of Generations United that are officially on record in support of the bill. We strongly urge this subcommittee to report favorably on HR 1492 and provide leadership to assure its passage.

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The following organizations are on record in support of HR 1492, The Young Americans Act

American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association for International Aging
American Association of Children's Residential Centers
American Association of Retired Persons
American Federation of Teachers
American Foundation for the Blind
American Home Economics Association
The American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc.
The American Orthopsychiatric Association, Inc.
American Red Cross
American Society on Aging
Association for the Care of Children's Health
Association of Junior Leagues
Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America
B'nai B'rith International
Camp Fire, Inc.
Catholic Charities USA
Center for Law & Social Policy
Center for Population Options
Child Care Action Campaign
The Child Welfare League of America
The Children's Foundation
Congressional Award Foundation
Generations Together
Girls Clubs of America
Institute for Educational Leadership
Joint Action in Community Service
National Adoption Center
The National Assembly
National Association for Home Care
National Association of Homes for Children
National Association of Service & Conservation Corps
National Association of Social Workers
National Association of State Units on Aging
National Center on Aging & Community Education

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Organizations on record in support of the Young Americans Act (Continued)

National Community Education Association
National Council of Jewish Women
National Council of Senior Citizens
The National Council on the Aging
National Crime Prevention Council
National Farmers Union
National Mental Health Association
The National Network of Runaway & Youth Services, Inc.
The National PTA
National Perinatal Association
National Urban League,Inc.
Older Women's League
Opportunities for Older Americans
Orphan Foundation
Positive Youth Development Initiative
Save the Children
70001 Training & Employment Institute
Travelers Aid Association of America
Travelers Aid International
Understanding Aging, Inc
United Way of America
WAIF, Inc.
YMCA of the USA
Youth Service America

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you very much. I appreciate your reminding us that we have passed some imperfect bills and reminding us that this is Capitol Hill and not Mount Sinai. Some of us maybe think otherwise sometimes.

[Laughter.]

Ira?

STATEMENT OF IRA M. SCHWARTZ, DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF YOUTH POLICY, SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Mr. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, I want to thank you very much for inviting me to testify this morning. I have had a number of opportunities to work with this committee and I appreciate this particular invitation. I have followed the work of this group and appreciate the fine work and leadership that you have given on children and family issues.

The members of this subcommittee are certainly well informed about the problems confronting children and families and I will not take the time to go over them.

Certainly they were eloquently stated, I think, by Congressman Kennedy in his testimony and my colleague, Joyce Strom.

I think the articulation of a national policy or set of policies, particularly those goals that have been enumerated in H.R. 1492, more commonly referred to as the Young Americans Act, really addresses, I think, many of the issues that have been discussed here this morning and represents an important, essential step, I think, in improving and addressing some of the problems confronting children and families.

One of the basic ingredients in developing national policy is good information, and I think Congressman Sawyer properly identified that particular issue in his comments.

We at the Center for the Study of Youth Policy commissioned a paper by Professor Paul Lehrman at Rutgers University to study the various national data bases related to children and youth and to see what could be done to begin to strengthen those and integrate those so that we could have an accurate accounting of not only where our children are, which we do not have, unfortunately, but also what are some of the kinds of needs and issues that confront them.

Professor Lehrman has spent about twenty years of his distinguished academic career in this area and has put forward a document that is essentially modeled after the Children in Custody survey that is conducted every other year by the United States Census Bureau under contract to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

He has basically identified the fact that he felt that if this model were also applied to the child welfare area as well as to the mental health area we could within a very reasonable period of time and with a very modest investment of funds—in fact, perhaps using the existing resources that are already going into this data collection process—we could in a very short period of time have an accurate, thorough and comprehensive accounting of children out of their homes, particularly in residential placements, across all system

lines, which would be an important step, I think, in helping the members of this subcommittee as well as others, and those of us who are working in the field, to help develop national policy and program.

I will be happy to make a copy of that document for this committee as well as a summary of it, and I think it would be something that you would find to be of interest.

We recently submitted it to a group of prestigious judges and they have looked at this who have been working in the children and family area and feel that this would be an important step, as well.

Although I was not involved in the development of H.R. 1492, and I certainly in general support the goals and the thrust of this particular legislation, there are a few issues that I would like to share with the committee that I think would warrant some further discussion.

One Joyce mentioned, the area of juvenile justice. In going through the legislation, clearly, while it calls for coordination, which is needed, it establishes in legislation the administration of family and children youth services and provides broad discretion for the administrator in a variety of areas related to children and families, one area that is noticeably absent is juvenile justice, juvenile delinquency and delinquency prevention.

It seems to me that it might be worthwhile to re-examine whether this particular office ought to be relocated, perhaps in the Department of Health and Human Services.

This was the original intent of the crafters of the Juvenile Justice legislation back in the early 1970s, and for a variety of reasons, mainly political, it was decided to house that legislation in the United States Department of Justice.

I think that it would be worthwhile to re-examine that particular decision and whether or not this would be one way of helping to eliminate some of the fragmentation that Congressman Tauke identified earlier.

I mean, certainly you cannot relocate all programs, but this might be one step in helping to bring together this particular aspect of the program and provide more emphasis on prevention, which again was one of the initial hopes and dreams of that particular legislation.

The bill also declares that it is the joint duty and responsibility of the Federal Government, the states and the local political subdivisions to assist children and youth to secure equal opportunity to and full and free access to the best physical and mental health care and adequate and safe physical shelter, the highest quality of educational opportunities, as well as other things.

The question that was raised in my mind about these particular objectives is whether we are talking about entitlements.

It seems to me that this is an issue that is worthy of discussion, because I am wondering about those particular jurisdictions that are unable to provide good physical and mental health care and services.

Really, what are some of the long-term aspirations and hopes of this particular legislation?

So it seems to me that it is an issue that is worthy of discussion. I think it would be important to know where we are hoping to head and what might be some of the benchmarks and the implications for states and localities that perhaps might not be able to meet some of those particular objectives.

The bill calls for a White House conference on young Americans and I think that this is an important event and I would strongly encourage that this take place.

I would suggest, however, that, given the relatively low political influence that children have in this country, we consider having such a conference periodically to examine what progress we have made and to help make sure that children's issues are kept on the national agenda.

Also, that might be an appropriate forum to re-examine perhaps the juvenile justice program and to hear from others in terms of what their thinking might be on that particular legislation and program.

The Office places a great deal of emphasis on coordination and clearly there are many examples in the states, and Joyce, I think, appropriately identified many of the examples that are underway nationally throughout the country. I would just urge a bit of caution, because in some places we are seeing coordination sort of mask a flurry of activity, or appearing to generate a lot of activity, when in fact one of the basic underlying problems is a serious lack of resources.

I can share with you a personal example in the state of Michigan. We just completed a study of the entire state budget in Michigan including particularly the implications for children and families, and we looked at the trends over the past decade.

Unfortunately, what we found was that children and families have not fared very well during the entire past decade and are still having difficulties in our state.

On the other hand, our state prison budget has grown by more than three hundred percent and prison construction is underway at an enormous pace.

It is unfortunately my displeasure to share with you the fact that as we sit here this morning we have as many employees in our state department of corrections as we have in our entire department of social services, adult as well as children's services.

I think five years ago, if I were to share that with a group of social service personnel in Michigan and would have predicted that this would have taken place, I think they would have thrown me out of the room, but unfortunately that is the situation that we find ourselves in.

As well as the fact that our revenues in the state are not increasing at a rate with which we can direct and correct some of the problems in our human services, also we are finding that some of our human service resources are not being spent as wisely as they should be.

For instance, we are spending less than $10 million on prevention services and more than $200 million on the out-of-home placement of children, largely driven by the numbers of children and the great growth of children going into residential treatment, which is particularly expensive.

So we need to look at not only increasing our resources but also redirecting many of our resources.

Michigan's example, I would suggest, is not unique. As I have visited more than forty states in the past three years, many states are spending a lot of money at the deepest end of the system, which is absorbing an enormous and disproportionate amount of resources, monies that really ought to be moved to the front end to strengthen families and to improve prevention services.

Again, Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, I want to thank you for inviting me to be here. I want to commend you on this important hearing. Feel free to call upon us to share with you any other information we may have, and I would be happy to answer any questions.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ira M. Schwartz follows:]

TESTIMONY OF IRA M. SCHWARTZ

PROFESSOR AND DIRECTOR

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF YOUTH POLICY

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 28, 1989

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee on Human Resources, my name is Ira M. Schwartz. I am Professor and Director of the Center for the Study of Youth Policy at the School of Social Work, University of Michigan. I served as the Administrator of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention from 1979-81. I had the privilege of working with this Subcommittee during that period, and have had the opportunity to provide testimony on a number of issues addressed by this distinguished body since that time.

I want to begin by thanking the Chairman and the other members of the Subcommittee for inviting me to testify this morning. The question regarding the need for a national policy regarding the welfare and future of America's children and youth is one of the most critical issues we face. The future of our country, our ability to compete in a global economy, and the safety and security of our citizens rests in the hands of the next and subsequent generations. Despite this, virtually every important social indicator suggests that America's children are in trouble.

The members of this Subcommittee are well informed about the problems confronting America's children and their families. While I do not think that it is productive to dwell on these problems, I think it is important to note that:

1. Children make up the largest impoverished group of citizens in the country. Child poverty represents one of the most difficult challenges we face as we stand on the threshold of the 21st century.

2. A large proportion of America's children do not have access to adequate health care. Many children are not being immunized from childhood diseases.

3. More children are being confined in institutions in the juvenile justice, child welfare, and mental health systems than at any time in recent memory. Moreover, the rates of institutionalization are increasing and they can be expected to continue to increase in the future.

4. Nationally, one out of every four 9th graders will not finish high school with their class. In some of the large city school districts, the drop out rates are as high or higher than the graduation rates, particularly for minority youth.

The articulation of a national policy or set of policies, particularly those enumerated in H.R. 1492 or the "Young Americans Act" as it is more commonly referred to, that addresses these and other problems confronting children, youth, and their families is an important and

essential step in the right direction. It will represent the goals to be achieved and provide guidance at the national, state, and locals levels for planning and in the development and allocation of resources.

One important element needed in order to develop sound public policy is data. The data needed must be comprehensive, accurate, and available in a timely fashion to policymakers and professionals. Unfortunately, as the members of the subcommittee know, such data about children, particularly children placed out of their homes in the child welfare, juvenile justice, and childrens mental health systems are not readily available. Because of this, the Center for the Study of Youth Policy commissioned Professor Paul Lerman from Rutgers University to study the various national child welfare, juvenile justice, and children mental health data systems and explore how they could be strengthened, and integrated. Professor Lerman produced a thoughtful document with recommendations that represent a cost-effective blueprint for action. His most important recommendation is that the U.S. Census Bureau be charged with the responsibility for collecting data on all children living in residential settings outside of their homes. His recommendation is based on the U.S. Census Bureau's work in administering the Bi-ennial Survey of Children in Public and Private Youth Detention and Correctional Facilities under a contractual agreement with the Department of Justice.

Professor Lerman's paper has been reviewed by a distinguished group of judges as well as representatives from respected professional associations, public interest groups, and child advocacy organizations. The consensus of opinion is that Professor Lerman's recommendations deserve careful consideration and should be implemented as soon as possible. I hope the Subcommittee will consider this important work as being an important and necessary ingredient in the development of a national youth policy.

Although the invitation I received to testify did not indicate that H.R. 1492 would be on the agenda, I would like to make a few comments about that bill because it is the only piece of legislation on this issue that is being proposed and because it enjoys the support of many respected organizations and individuals interested in the welfare of our children.

Although I was not involved in the development of H.R. 1492, in general I support the goals and thrust of the bill, however, I have some questions and concerns which I feel need to be addressed. For example:

1. The bill declares that it is the joint duty and responsibility of the federal government, the states, and local political subdivisions "...to assist our

children and youth to secure equal opportunity to and full and free access to--

(1) the best possible physical and mental health;
(2) adequate and safe physical shelter;
(3) the highest quality of educational opportunity;
(4) effective training, apprenticeships, opportunities for community service, and productive employment;
(5) the widest range of civic, cultural, and recreational activities which recognize young Americans as resources and promote self-esteem and a stake in their communities;
(6) comprehensive community services which are efficient, coordinated, and readily available; and
(7) genuine participation in decisions concerning the planning and managing of their lives."

While one would be hard pressed to quarrel with these objectives, the question that is raised in my mind is whether the Congress is declaring that these objectives are entitlements for children and their families. The small amount of money being requested to implement the bill would argue against the objectives being entitlements. But, is this an attempt to stick the nose of the camel under the tent? Do the supporters and sponsors of this legislation have expectations in mind that may not be clearly stated in the bill? It seems to me that this issue needs to be discussed so that everyone clearly understands the purpose and potential implications of the legislation from the very beginning.

2. The bill formerly establishes the Administration on Children, Youth, and Families in the Department of Health and Human Services. The Administrator of the program will be appointed by the President subject to confirmation by the Senate. This will institutionalize and increase the visibility and status of the program. The Administrator of the office is given authority to develop plans, stimulate and conduct research, and authorize grants in a broad range of areas affecting children, youth, and their families (health, mental health, housing and shelter, foster care, teen parenting, child care, family preservation, etc.) Noticeably absent from the areas of responsibility is juvenile justice, juvenile delinquency, and delinquency prevention. Presumably, this is because the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act and the federal juvenile justice program is administered by the U.S. Department of Justice.

Perhaps the time has come to re-examine the appropriateness of housing the federal juvenile justice program within the Department of Justice. The members of Congress who originally crafted the Juvenile Justice and

Delinquency Prevention Act wanted to locate the program in the old Department of Health, Education, and Welfare--now the Department of Health and Human Services. Their thinking was that a greater emphasis would be placed on prevention activities if the program was housed in HHS as compared to the DOJ with its emphasis on prosecution, formal juvenile court handling, and youth detention and correction.

In addition, H.R. 1492 calls for the creation of a Federal Council on Children, Youth, and Families. The mandate is similar in nature to the Federal Interagency Coordinating Council on Children and Youth created by the JJDP Act although its scope and responsibilities are much broader. This, too, provides incentive to re-examine the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention program to see whether it should be included in the Young Americans Act.

3. H.R. 1492 calls for a White House Conference on Young Americans. In part, the purpose of the Conference is to develop a public policy agenda and priorities for the Nation. I suggest that consideration be given to having such a Conference on a regular basis. This would help to ensure that children and family issues are kept on the national public policy agenda and receive the attention they deserve. Perhaps the question of whether the federal juvenile justice program should be incorporated into the "Young Americans Act" should be one of the issues addressed at such a meeting.

4. H.R. 1492 appears to place a great deal of emphasis on the need to coordinate children's programs at the federal level. The assumption is that better coordination will result in improved services at the federal level and this in turn may serve as a model for children's programs at the state level. Improved coordination of services is a desirable objective, however, H.R. 1492's emphasis on service coordination is misplaced. The flurry of activity inherent in coordinating services may act as a smokescreen to hide the reality that insufficient federal and state resources are directed toward education, health care, and human services.

Recently the Center for the Study of Youth Policy completed an analysis of the entire state budget in Michigan, particularly as it affects children and families. Our analysis revealed that state and federal resources available for human services declined while the need for these services rose dramatically. This has forced the burden of cost for needed services on local governmental entities. By way of illustration, between 1979 and 1985 reliance on local own-source revenues rose an annual average of 6 percent while state and federal aid to Michigan local government units declined by 3.8 percent. Many local governments cannot afford to compensate for the loss of federal and

state aid resulting in great disparities in the quality and availability of services throughout Michigan.

Another finding of our analysis of Michigan's budget, revealed that state funds are often misspent. For example, state spending for prison operating expenses rose by 321 percent between the FY1979 and 1989. While state expenditures for K-12 education increased only 40.3 percent during the same period. By FY1991 the Michigan Department of Corrections will have 14,115 FTEs, approximately the same number of FTEs as the Michigan Department of Social Services (14,139). Yet, the Michigan Department of Social Services is currently experiencing a shortage of 176 child protective service workers, and is unable to hire additional staff due to budget constraints. Even within Michigan's Department of Social Services funds are inappropriately expended (e.g., in FY1988 only $5.5 million of the Department's budget was clearly earmarked for programs which prevent out-of-home placement in comparison with $210 million spent to keep children in foster homes and institutions). This expenditure inequity is in part a response to insufficient federal funds for prevention programs. In short, coordination of services is not replacement for inadequate resources for children and family services.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee I want to commend you for conducting a hearing on the need for a national policy on children and youth. It is an issue whose time has come. I want to thank you again for inviting me to testify and I hope my comments will be helpful to you in your deliberations.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you very much. Dr. Delgado?

STATEMENT OF JANE L. DELGADO, PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, NATIONAL COALITION OF HISPANIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES ORGANIZATION

Dr. DELGADO. Thank you very much. I am very glad to be here. Most of you, when I come here, it has been because of my four years as CEO of COSSMHO, but you should also know that prior to that I spent six years in health and human services, two serving time in HDS, two serving time in the Office of Community Services and two serving time in the immediate Office of the Secretary—and it was serving time.

My testimony details some of the concerns I have with respect to hispanic youth. I talk about what the characteristics are, what the demographics are.

When I talk about national policy and what we need to do, I think the most important thing, having been in a bureaucracy, is to remember vision.

Bureaucracies get hung up in trying to interpret what is legislated, and I think when it comes to youth policy it is because very often we have an assortment of programs which already exist. The idea of being visionary is very important, so that you do not get hung up in minutiae.

The second concern I have has to do with recognizing diversity. I ask people, do not be color blind. Recognize that there is color in America and recognize it and deal with it, both in the treatment and the programs that are designed.

Too often hispanics and blacks—and my comments will be focused on hispanics and blacks, because by the year 2000 hispanic and black youth will make up close to thirty percent of the youth population of America—need to be included in specific language in legislation.

My third concern has to do with the role of community-based organizations. Lots of discussion on state and local entities, community-based organizations in distressed communities, are the ones who are the front line of providing services.

They need to have funds. They need to have resources. They need to be acknowledged for all the work they have done.

Another concern in national policy—you know, people always say, well, hispanics are very family oriented and they have strong families.

Well, the truth is that sometimes we have strong families and sometimes we do not, just like everybody else.

The difference is that the concept of family is extremely important to us and very often when people develop youth programs they develop a program where a prerequisite for services is not dealing with the family issue. We are concerned about that.

If you look at those four areas there are some further considerations which need to be taken into account when developing a national policy for youth.

One is to look seriously at the different agencies. I am very loyal to HHS, but Justice has done some great work also and we need to include them.

A bureaucratic maze does not need to be recreated and it will be, because we have done it before and it will continue to happen. We cannot afford to do that with youth in America.

The other concern I have is, where is the youth voice? Throughout the AOA process and the aging legislation we had the aging voice because they are voters and because they stay in the category of over fifty-five for a long time.

One of the concerns we have with youth is, how are we going to maintain that voice and also make it flexible enough so we change what we do as the dynamics of youth changes? That is a very important concern.

My next one is, where is the hispanic and black voice? One of the things which concerns me is that people talk about the year 2000 and do not realize how America is changing and how it has already changed.

Most of the hispanics who are going to be here are not people who just arrived, but our great growth is from our high fertility rate. We like children and we have a lot of them. Where is their voice when it comes to national youth policy?

Finally, where is the money? In order to have any of these services we need money, and I am concerned when you say that there is a need to have a match, because if you look at state and local governments they are least likely to invest in those communities which are most distressed.

So if you are going to match funds you usually match in those communities where you will have a success, because success breeds more money. Meanwhile, what you end up perpetuating is a permanent underclass, which I am sure nobody wants to do.

In conclusion, I also want to add that as someone who really believes in coordination, coordination is not enough, and I am glad Ira said that.

Coordination is often an excuse for not being comprehensive. I also think that people think coordination and sharing mean the same thing, sharing information. That is not coordination. That is not what we need with youth programs.

Additionally, decision making has to be as much as possible at the local levels. Local communities know the cultural and linguistic diversity of their communities and we must be responsive to that.

To say that we can do this without money is not realistic. We need money. Our programs need the funds at the local level.

People think you can just get groups together to talk. You just cannot do that without money. You need coordination money.

A national youth policy is an admirable goal. We look forward to it, especially one that is responsive to the needs of hispanics and blacks as we go toward the year 2000.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Jane L. Delgado follows:]

TESTIMONY OF
JANE L. DELGADO, Ph.D.
PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
NATIONAL COALITION OF HISPANIC HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES ORGANIZATIONS (COSSMHO)

BEFORE THE SUBSOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

TOWARDS A NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY

JULY 28, 1989
WASHINGTON, D.C.

National Coalition of Hispanic Health and
Human Services Organizations (COSSMHO)
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My name is Dr. Jane L. Delgado, and I am President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Services Organizations, more commonly known by our acronym--COSSMHO. Now celebrating our fifteenth year of operation, COSSMHO is the only national Hispanic health organization. We are a private, nonprofit, membership organization and the only national Hispanic organization dedicated to improving the health and psychosocial well-being of the nation's Hispanic population. Our membership includes Hispanic and non-Hispanic health professionals, community-based organizations serving Hispanic communities, state and county health departments with significant Hispanic populations, and corporations with an interest in the health needs of Hispanic Americans. Our central mission is to develop a community-based infrastructure that can effectively respond to the health and human services needs of Hispanic Americans in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner. Since COSSMHO's founding we have worked to represent the diverse Hispanic populations in a national network and have had a special focus on the needs of families and children.

Our testimony describes the demographics and characteristics of the Hispanic youth population as well as specific recommendations to guide development of a national youth policy.

HISPANIC AMERICA--A YOUTHFUL POPULATION

Today, one out of every twelve persons in this country is Hispanic. Since 1980 the Hispanic population has experienced phenomenal growth. The population has increased by 34 percent--a rate of growth that is five times that of the non-Hispanic population[1]. There will come a point soon after the turn of the century when Hispanics will be the largest racial or ethnic population in the country[2]. Thus in the year 2000, Hispanics will represent one in five working-age persons[3].

It is important to note that the Hispanic community is a youthful and growing community in an overall national population which is aging and getting smaller. This is evident in the data which follow:

- Between the years 1990 and 2080, the Hispanic population is expected to grow by 39.7 million persons while the non-Hispanic white population is projected to decrease by 16 million persons[4].

- Currently, the median age of the Hispanic population is 7.4 years less than the median age of non-Hispanics[5].

- The Hispanic population is projected to have a lower median age than any racial/ethnic population group through the year 2080[5].

- More than one third (35.1%) of the Hispanic community is under 18 years of age compared to one fourth (25.6%) of the non-Hispanic community[6].

The overwhelming factor in the rapid growth of the Hispanic community is a high fertility rate--a rate that is almost 50 percent higher than that for non-Hispanic women. The fertility rate for Hispanic women in 1986 was 93.9 births per 1,000 women aged 15-44 years as compared to 63.3 for non-Hispanic women[8]. It is a common myth that the majority of growth in the Hispanic community is from new immigration. The fact of the matter is that the majority of current and projected growth will come from the community's high fertility rate.

CHARACTERISTICS OF HISPANIC YOUTH

Poverty, substance abuse, adolescent pregnancy, and incarceration are some of the challenges facing American youth. For Hispanic youth the major difference lies in the severity of the problems and in the often limited programmatic options which are made available to them. This is best demonstrated by the increasing numbers of Hispanic children living in poverty, significant abuse of both legal and illegal substances, high rates of adolescent pregnancy, and disproportionate incarceration of Hispanic youth.

Poverty

Poverty is increasingly becoming a fixture on the Hispanic American landscape. Today one in four Hispanic families lives in poverty, a rate that is two and one half times the rate of non-Hispanic families, and some 2.7 million Hispanic children--two of every five--live in poverty. The poverty rate among Hispanic families in 1987 was 25.8% compared to 9.7% for non-Hispanic families[9]. Furthermore, there has been significant growth in the number of Hispanic children living in poverty. Between 1978 and 1987, the poverty rate for Hispanic children has increased by nearly half from 27.2% to 39.6% of all Hispanic children living in poverty[10]. In addition, the number of poor Hispanic children grew by 211,000 between 1986 to 1987[11].

The poverty rate for Hispanic children in female-headed households was 70.1% in 1987. In that year as well, almost one in three (30.9%) of young Hispanic families (families in which the household head is aged 15-34) were living in poverty[12].

Substance Abuse

Substance abuse is increasingly becoming a destructive fact of life for Hispanic communities. By age 18, a Hispanic youth is likely to have had some experimentation with alcohol, cigarettes, or an illicit substance.

As Hispanic youth leave their teen years, their chances of having used alcohol are one in two. Recently completed analyses of the Hispanic Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (HHANES) conducted by members of

COSSMHO's Hispanic Health Research Consortium show rates of alcohol use by age 18 to be 53% for Cuban Americans, 46% for Puerto Ricans, and 50% for Mexican Americans[13].

The research also found rates of cigarette use by age 18 to be 34% for Puerto Ricans, 26% for Mexican Americans, and 21% for Cuban Americans[14]. Furthermore, the 1985 Secretary's Task Force on Black and Minority Health found both male and female Hispanic adolescents report more smoking than their Black and non-Hispanic white peers. Such early initiation to alcohol and cigarette use only serves to increase the likelihood of addictive behavior and subsequent health risks and costs.

The use of illicit substances by Hispanic youth is also significant. HHANES research show rates of marijuana use by age 18 to be 50% for Puerto Ricans, 46% for Mexican Americans, and 24% for Cuban Americans[15]. The research also found rates of cocaine use by age 18 to be 20% for Puerto Ricans, 7% for Mexican Americans, and 7% for Cuban Americans[16]. A 1979 study of Mexican American children and adolescents in Los Angeles barrios found prevalence of inhalants 14 times the prevalence found among the general population[17].

Adolescent Pregnancy

Adolescent pregnancy has become a continuing factor in reduced opportunities for Hispanic youth. Nearly one in six (16.4%) of Hispanic origin births in 1986 was to a teenager as compared with 12.0% of births to non-Hispanic mothers[18].

One in two Hispanic adolescents has had sexual intercourse. According to the National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG), 50% of all Hispanic women between the ages of 15 and 19 have had sexual intercourse[19]. This compares to 44% of white adolescents.

Of significant concern is the age at which sexual intercourse began for this sexually active population. According to the 1982 NSFG, of Hispanic women between the ages of 15 and 19, 80% had sexual intercourse before the age of sixteen. This compares to 68% of sexually active adolescent whites who had sexual intercourse before the age of sixteen.

Only one in four Hispanic adolescents use contraception at first intercourse. This is an important indicator of the extent to which adolescents try to reduce the risk of pregnancy at the beginning of their sexual experience. The 1982 NSFG reports that 23% of Hispanic adolescent women (15-19 years of age) who have ever had sexual intercourse used contraception at first intercourse. More black adolescent women (36%) and over twice as many white adolescent women (55%) used contraception at first coitus[20].

Incarceration

Incarceration of Hispanic youth is growing at an unacceptable rate. A 1986 study of the Children in Custody data base calculated that in 1979 the rate of incarceration of Hispanic juvenile males was 2.27 times higher than the rate for non-Hispanic white juvenile males[21]. In 1982, the rate of incarceration of Hispanic juvenile males was 2.6 times higher than that of non-Hispanic white juvenile males. The study also found that between 1979 and 1982 the percent growth in the incarceration rate for Hispanic juvenile males (36%) was twice that among white juvenile males (18%).

Once Hispanics are in the juvenile justice system, there is a disturbing disparity in their placement in facilities. One-day counts for 1982 of the Children in Custody data base show that 48% of whites in the juvenile justice system were in private facilities as compared to only 26% of Hispanics in the juvenile justice system--a difference of almost two to one[22]. This constitutes a "hidden correctional system" in which white youth are placed in private facilities (e.g. non-secure group homes, halfway homes) which tend to offer youth a greater chance for rehabilitation while Hispanic youth are being placed in public facilities which offer less opportunity for individual attention and rehabilitation[23].

TOWARDS A NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY

Responding to the needs of Hispanic youth will require that we restructure our youth serving programs. The word "restructure" has been carefully chosen. We already know what works and in many instances have successful programs in place. The challenge is to better use our existing resources so that we can provide the comprehensive services which are needed. This requires that a national youth policy:

- o allows communities to develop their own programmatic priorities and needs;
- o invests in community based organizations;
- o mandates cooperation among the major components of the communities;
- o promotes case management of youth services;
- o recognizes the diversity and richness of communities by insuring cultural and linguistic relevance of programs; and, finally
- o it must be responsive to helping families.

We must allow communities a voice in the development and implementation of programs for their youth, invest in community-based organizations, promote case management of youth services, and promote a greater level of cooperation between youth serving agencies and the communities they seek to serve.

One of the most important priorities for a national youth policy is to allow communities the flexibility to develop programmatic priorities and institute youth services which reflect their priorities and needs. In 1984, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention provided the initial funding to COSSMHO to develop community-designed and community-based prevention programs which built on the local juvenile justice and delinquency structures in eight cities. This project known as Proyecto Esperanza (Project Hope) offered eight different sites the opportunity to assess the specific needs in their communities and develop programmatic responses. Youth Development Inc. in Albuquerque, NM determined that the best manner to approach the disproportionate rate of juvenile incarceration was by focusing on the family unit as the recipient of services rather than the youth in trouble. Proceed, Inc. of Elizabeth, NJ determined to focus on prevention through counseling for abusive and neglectful parents.

Centro de Amistad, Inc. of Guadalupe, AZ sought to prevent abuse among children by training parents to conduct family strengthening workshops in their own home for other parents. The Hispanic Health Council, Inc. of Hartford, CT sought to establish the basis for a long term program of an education center to prevent child abuse. The Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans, Inc. of Houston, TX became a licensing facility for foster care host homes. The Nevada Association of Latin Americans, Inc. of Las Vegas, NV recruited bilingual case workers to assist the areas child abuse, runaway, and delinquency programs handle their Hispanic caseload. La Familia Counseling Center, Inc. of Sacramento, CA produced materials to assist service providers (e.g., schools, police, churches, social agencies) to work with abused Hispanic youth and their families. The Institute for Human Resources Development, Inc. of Salt Lake City, UT developed a crisis intervention program and training for teenage mothers to reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect.

The relevance of these projects to their community is evidenced by the fact that these sites have been able to access alternative funding and incorporated the activities into their ongoing programs. By designing programs which were responsive to unmet needs in their community, in a manner which was culturally and linguistically appropriate, these organizations have had a significant effect on juvenile justice and delinquency prevention in their communities. This success was possible because of the flexibility and self-determination allowed in program design.

A second priority for a national youth policy is to invest in community-based organizations which can respond to the challenges facing Hispanic youth. In order to institute programs which are responsive to community needs, there must be some form of community infrastructure to handle programmatic activity. This will require investing programmatic money in community-based organizations. By conducting programmatic activity through community-based organizations, there is a much greater likelihood of community acceptance and assurance that the program will be

responsive to community needs. Unlike a federal or state office, a community-based organization is held accountable by the community it seeks to serve and serves as an ongoing resource for the community.

A third priority for a national youth policy is to mandate that communities (leadership, business, community-based organizations) and state and county officials cooperatively develop youth service programs and target resources. COSSMHO is currently holding town meetings across the country, through our Youth 2000 project, to determine the programmatic priorities for families and youth. The central feature of all of these meetings has been a strong call for cooperative action. The communities have determined the participants in their town meetings, and the desire for cooperative action has been reflected in the invited participants. Such participants have generally included school board members, teachers, police department officials, elected officials, business leaders, and other community agencies as well as those most active in community organizations. Mandating that state and county officials promote such cooperative activity offers one of our best hopes for substantiative and lasting positive change in our communities.

A national youth policy must promote case management of youth services. In the provision of services to the Hispanic community there is a great need for holistic and family oriented services. A child is at risk because of many factors and his or her needs are not met by a neat categorical program. Our social services must be designed and operated in a way that an at risk youth can have a meaningful and ongoing intervention in their life. Community-based organizations offer an ideal resource for such involvement. The earmarking of funds under the maternal and child health block grant for the development of community-based service networks and case management during the Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1986 was a positive step which should be replicated under other block grants effecting families and youth.

America is diversity and that is a strength. In developing programs and legislation it is crucial to recognize the benefits of having programs which are culturally and linguistically compatible with the population which are being served. It is unfortunate that the wisdom of this has all too often been ignored during the design of programs which are meant to impact those most at risk. One has only to look at the success of advertising campaigns to see that populations are not "hard to reach".

Finally, especially for Hispanics, it is important to understand that services must also be made available to families. Hispanics are dedicated to a strong concept of family. It does not mean that all our families are strong and healthy. It does mean that we rely more often on our families for support and guidance. And our families need support. Hispanic youth do not live or operate in isolation from families, nor should we make that a prerequisite for services. Families, in all their configurations, have made it possible for Hispanics to survive and often flourish in an environment which is at best tolerant of our existence.

I look forward to a national policy on children and youth which is responsive to the needs of Hispanics.

1 U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. *The Hispanic Population in the United States: March 1988 (Advance Report)*, **Current Population Reports**, Population Characteristics Series P-20, No. 431.

2 U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. *Projections of the Hispanic Population: 1983 to 2080*, Population Estimates and Projections Series P-25, No. 995, Table T.
Using middle series projections, in 2080 the Hispanic population will total 59.6 million people, the Black population will total 55.7 million people, and other races will total 23.4 million people.

3 Ibid.
Calculation uses middle series data and defines working age population as those persons ages 18 to 64.

4 Ibid, Table P.

5 Census Bureau, *The Hispanic Population in the United States: March 1988.*

6 Census Bureau, *Projections of the Hispanic Population: 1983 to 2080, Table R.*

7 Census Bureau, *The Hispanic Population in the United States: March 1988.*, Table 1.

8 National Center for Health Statistics. *Advance Report of Final Natality Statistics, 1986.* **Monthly Vital Statistics Report**, Vol. 37, No. 3, Supplement July 12, 1988

9 Census Bureau, *The Hispanic Population in the United States: March 1988.*,

10 Robert Greenstein, et. al. *Shortchanged: Recent Developments in Hispanic Poverty, Income and Employment*, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, November, 1988.

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.

13 Hortensia Amaro. *Initiation of Substance Use Among Mexican American, Cuban American, and Puerto Rican Adolescents and Young Adults: Findings from the Hispanic HHANES.* COSSMHO Hispanic Health Research Consortium, 1988. Under Journal review.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid.

17 Padilla, E.R., Padilla, A.M., Morales A, et. al. *Inhalant, marijuana, and alcohol abuse among barrio children and adolescents.* Int. J. Addictions 1979; 14:945-64.

18 Ibid.

19 Alan Guttmacher Institute. *Hispanic teenagers: A reproductive profile.* (Report presented at the COSSMHO Sixth National Biennial Conference), 1986.

20 National Center for Health Statistics. *Contraceptive Use: United States, 1982,* **Vital and Health Statistics,** Data from the National Survey of Family Growth, Series 23, No. 12.

21 Ira M. Schwartz. *The Incarceration of Hispanic Youth,* Center for the Study of Youth Policy, Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, 1986.

22 Ibid.

23 COSSMHO, *Juvenile Justice and Hispanic Youth: Issues and Responses,* Proceedings of the Juvenile Justice Symposium convened during COSSMHO's Sixth Biennial National Conference on Health and Human Services.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you very much. Two bells have rung in the House, indicating that there is a vote, so we will take about seven minutes or eight minutes to run over and come back.

I have some questions for the panel, so take a seventh inning stretch here while we are voting.

[A brief recess was taken.]

Chairman KILDEE. The subcommittee will reconvene. We will start because we never know when another vote may come up and we are trying to wrap this session up here.

I think all three of you have finished your testimony, then, so I will start with the question. We have programs for youth at the Federal level in the Department of Education, the Department of Justice, as you mentioned, Ira, in your testimony, and in the Department of Health and Human Services.

This bill would statutorily establish the Administration for Children, Youth and Services within the Department of Health and Human Services. I think it already exists there, but this would give it a statutory basis.

Would that agency, then, that Administration for Children, Youth and Families within the Department of Health and Human Services have any superintending or coordinating function with the youth programs that exist in the Department of Education and the Department of Justice?

How would you envision it coordinating those programs?

Ms. STROM. I would be comfortable with that. The conversation has to start somewhere, and in fact it does exist on many issues now. This would assure that it happens.

I think that Education and Juvenile Justice still have some of their very specific issues and concerns and this bill is not about eroding that or putting in a great big, you know, in the sky—all children's services under one thing.

I actually directed the Office for Children in Massachusetts and did very much of what this bill would do at a state level.

We do it—in the Human Services we were not responsible for, for instance, education and for some of the health things, but what this bill did was to get those commissioners and secretaries talking.

It worked without—what it did was legislate calling the meetings, so to speak, but it did not cause a problem for us in that regard.

We had to sit there until we worked out agreements and got things to work, but I did not see it as eroding the authority or threatening the turf, you know, anymore than any other conversations we have when we put different things together.

Mr. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Chairman, I just want to comment. That is one of the reasons why I suggested that you may want to re-examine, you know, where the Office of Juvenile Justice ought to be located.

I recognize that there are other agencies that address the problems of children, but this seems to be a natural thing, in part because of the original intent of the legislation and particularly with its emphasis on prevention, but also because the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act creates a Federal interagency coordinating council on children and youth which in part is responsible for evaluating Federal programs that deal with children across

the board and trying to influence those policies of other agencies to try to get them to conform to the mandates of the Juvenile Justice program.

It seemed to me that when I looked at what was being proposed with respect to this Federal council or council on family and children being proposed in the Young Americans Act that it was similar in nature but far broader in scope.

It would seem to me that that would be another reason why we ought to re-examine, you know, whether or not the Juvenile Justice program ought to fit in, and maybe abolish the Federal interagency coordinating council on children and youth and have it part—those functions essentially just folded into the new council being proposed.

I mean, I think it raises a question that ought to be looked at, and if this could strengthen those provisions, fine. If not, then perhaps it would be wiser to leave things as they are.

It looked to me like it was a duplicative function. Both are responsible for advising the president and the Congress and for preparing reports and issuing reports, and those functions are very similar.

I guess I can speak that way a little more freely. I was an administrator of the office and I realize that those who are sponsoring the legislation—I mean, there may be a little reluctance to recommend that kind of thing because, you know, it is sort of getting in on the turf of other agencies, but I think we ought to take an honest look at it.

If it seems to make sense, fine. If not, then it would be appropriate to leave things as they are, but nonetheless I think that this really does provide a fresh opportunity to re-examine that possibility.

Also, I think that many children clearly who enter the juvenile justice system—all the research shows that they are virtually interchangeable with the child welfare system and some of these other systems that these children come in contact with that would be under the direct responsibility of this particular office.

Dr. DELGADO. Yes. I want to add that I think it is important to not just look across agencies, but within agencies.

In HHS there are various programs in different agencies besides ACYF with major impact on children.

You can talk about the Office of Substance Abuse Prevention, that has the high risk youth program. You can talk about what is happening to the Family Services Administration.

If you are going to have something which is going to be an Administration for Children, Youth and Families, then you want to be a strong operating division of HHS. Then you have to see what programs you could bring under it in order to make its presence known and for it to be comprehensive at the local level. You would try to bring as many pieces together as you can at the Federal level.

I think what Ira is talking about is to give it a look across the agency and across agencies.

Chairman KILDEE. I think something that would be essential in the bill would be the, you know, coordination of the various programs that do exist.

Would strengthening the interagency council that exists now in some fashion be a way of addressing better coordination if we were to leave these programs in the three different—the Department of Education certainly touches youth—the three different departments?

Would that help some if we strengthened the interagency council?

Mr. SCHWARTZ. I think that that is certainly one option that ought to be looked at, but right now the current legislation really restricts the interagency coordinating council to only look at programs across the board that relate to children and youth, and particularly how they mesh with the objectives of the Juvenile Justice Act.

They do not, really, I think, include references to families, and so I think that that is the one major reservation that I have.

The other thing about the coordinating council—when I was the administrator, we made a concerted attempt to get the attorney general involved in chairing the meetings, and that really is specified in the legislation, that the attorney general is the chair, because as the administrator you are, even though it is a presidential appointment, you are down there several levels.

I think it is important to have the attorney general or a cabinet secretary chair those meetings, because otherwise you will not get their peers.

I mean, when the attorney general calls people listen, and they came to the meetings and they participated.

So if this thing is really going to have the kind of influence that it ought to have and really raise the questions that it ought to be raising and really serve as an important vehicle for influencing public policy related to children, bringing important issues before the Congress and the president, I think it is important that a cabinet secretary chair those meetings and that his or her counterparts be at that table.

Chairman KILDEE. I appreciate that, and as we work our way through this process of legislation if you have any other refinements or other ideas on how we can better provide the coordination which would be essential if we are to have a policy, the committee will remain open for any suggestions from any of you on that.

Mr. Poshard?

Mr. POSHARD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to discuss the logistics of the bill and the possible outcomes and the way that we could work things out mechanically to make the program work, but I am interested in something else. As some of you were speaking, especially Dr. Delgado, I began to wonder whether we are going to put enough money into this program to make it work. It is not going to work without an appropriate amount of resources.

I remembered a public health committee hearing we had back in the Illinois State Senate when I served there.

We were meeting that day with homeless people and also with teenage mothers who had become pregnant.

I remember there were twelve or fifteen members of the committee sitting and listening to testimony, and we had heard a lot of very good testimony.

Then one gentleman, who was homeless and who was pitifully dressed in rags started to speak and he complained about not getting enough to subsist on in the places where he had to stay. I think at that point in time everybody was in sympathy with the testimonies.

Then this gentleman all of a sudden made a statement. He said, "You know, you do not even give us enough—I have to scratch just to save enough to get a pack of cigarettes."

I felt an absolute tension go through the committee. I could tell what everybody on the committee was thinking.

Here is a guy without a home, who is being fed in a soup kitchen and he is worried about getting a pack of cigarettes.

Now, my concern is, why shouldn't he be worried about getting a pack of cigarettes? Why shouldn't a homeless person be worried? They are bad for our health, but that is beside the point.

You know, just because he is homeless and is being fed in a soup kitchen, does that mean he cannot smoke cigarettes like everybody else in the world?

You know, that did something to that committee. I remember our meeting in subsequent days in private, behind the scenes, and I remember comments like, "That is why the public will not support this program, and that is why we are not going to do anything to really get behind it, because the public perception is waste."

Then we heard some more testimony from young teenage pregnant mothers and from social workers who said that, well, these people spend all the money that they receive for the nutritional health of their children on junk food.

There again, you felt the same air of tension go through the committee.

How do we get past that? I mean, let me tell you, in this business resources flow because of the public relations that the legislation produces. Don't think they don't. That is the truth, because we are all for one thing. We have to answer to constituents and the public and everything else, but how do we educate people?

I am so afraid in this country that, when you have statements being made by the former President that people really do not mind sleeping on the streets, they really do not mind eating in soup kitchens and that sort of thing, it is almost as if we are validating every prejudice that the rest of us have in our hearts by those kinds of statements, and then the public says, "Yeah, that is right."

How do we get past that? What do we do to get the public to see the absolute necessity of what we are talking about here?

I do no know. I absolutely do not know.

Ms. STROM. I think a start is to make the declaration for a Young Americans Act, for a youth policy.

You know, we have just got to take a stand and then keep going, because there has certainly been corruption in Northrup and in the military budget, and it does not pull people back from going for it.

There has been trouble in HUD, the way that money is spent, and that has not pulled people back from saying we still need, you know, housing for people and to do it right.

I think we have to take the stand that we have got to invest in young people and put a policy together that makes sense.

There is not any scandal that our youth programs are wasting money. In fact, GAO sites the Runaway Youth Shelters and many of the programs for our young people as some of the best run, best managed, with money not being wasted, in the country.

We can be really proud of that. I think we have to do a better job of making that thing visible.

I think we have to just keep going forward and take that stand for young people. What this bill does is set the context like it did for older Americans. What this bill does is to make it a piece of legislation that mandates the discussion, so we cannot avoid the discussion anymore of doing something about it and seeing what is working.

Coordination works both when you have a lot of money and coordination is just as important when you do not have enough, because some of Lisa's problems where she went from place to place and over those years she never got to a dentist, that was not because there was not dental money available for her. It was because we did not do a good job with what we had.

These are the little kind of things we have got to do better about with what does exist.

Dr. DELGADO. I think that the two examples you bring up are excellent.

The reason they are is because those two populations, both the homeless and adolescent mothers, are probably referred to often as hard to reach, yet American marketing techniques have been extremely successful at reaching them to get a message of what to purchase.

What we have to do on our side in the health and human service side is to take those same techniques and apply them. We do not spend the kind of money, nor do we invest, because we do not see a long-term pay-off.

I think we have a lot to learn from the corporate sector and we are just starting to do that now.

Mr. SCHWARTZ. I think the only thing that I just want to add to that is something that Joyce mentioned earlier.

All of the public opinion surveys that have been administered nationally and in states over the past eight or ten years have consistently said, number one, Americans clearly understand the condition of America's children and for the first time in history feel that the next generation will not have the same standard of living that we enjoy.

Second, by a margin of three to one they indicate that they would be willing to have their taxes raised for services for children.

That is a very significant message and it has been consistent all across the board in all of the surveys.

I think that the growing attention in state legislatures as well as elsewhere about the condition of children in the states is an example, I think, that something in the next decade is clearly going to happen.

There will be action, I think, taken regarding children. How that will play out is subject to debate, but clearly the momentum is there and I think the support is there. Even though we have these

other examples, clearly I think people recognize the condition of America's children and are willing to invest in them.

At a time when everybody is talking about no taxes, I think frankly that the elected public officials have missed the message. They have missed the message. They have been thinking about no taxes, but what the people are saying is, "We do not want to just simply go for a general tax increase, but we will support an increase in our taxes if it goes for children."

Even in California, where they had a budget surplus and they asked people how they wanted those funds spent, if they wanted them turned back as a rebate, the public said no, that they wanted it to go into public education.

So I think the support is there.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you very much. Empirically, I believe it is there, too, from talking to people as I go back home.

I think we have to respond sometimes, too, because very often, the past president, you know, attacked the more vulnerable people in society, talking about some fraud, the welfare mother taking the change from her food stamps to buy oranges and using it to buy vodka.

I mean, he had some sleazy friends that were really into it right up to their elbows—some really sleazy friends. One was in his cabinet, at least one.

I think we really have to tack back and say, listen, these programs that my subcommittee has under its jurisdiction, I mean, those people out there are really dedicated people. They are not getting $300 thousand as a consultant for some HUD project, as a former secretary of Interior did.

I think we have got a great record.

Ms. STROM. We can be proud.

Chairman KILDEE. I appreciate the point you make there, too, Glenn. I think you make a very excellent point here.

We have a great record, and the programs under this subcommittee have a great record. That is not true of some of the other sleazy operations this government has been involved in.

Ms. STROM. You are right.

Chairman KILDEE. Some are very close friends of the one who talked about the oranges and vodka, too.

I get angry, but I think you should get angry over things like that.

I used to have that one sleazy guy testifying before my committee.

Let it be noted that I am speaking as a member of Congress here.

I think it is good to get angry once in a while.

The programs you people are involved in, these are great programs. They touch people's lives. You are audited and you come out looking really well on those things. Those dollars are really spent very, very well on very, very important programs.

Glenn, I think your point is excellent, that we have to really kind of get involved in some of this public relation thing and tell the story in that way. I think your point is excellent.

I notice amongst you today is Marion Mattingly, who is the Washington representative of the SAGs for their Juvenile Justice

Programs. We appreciate you being here and your continued interest in programs like this.

I want to thank all of our witnesses today. It has been a short hearing but a very, very good hearing.

I want to thank especially Lisa Nichols and Jennifer Kneeland. You are part of the history of this legislation and you did very, very well. You certainly have helped us today, all of you, giving us the information and inspiration to further address this very, very important issue of a national policy for children and youth.

The record will remain open for two additional weeks for any further submissions.

I would like to ask the witnesses, particularly this last panel, to come up with some new ideas or some suggestions as to how we can provide better coordination here as we proceed with this bill. We would appreciate that very much.

Thank you very much. We will stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:10 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

[Additional material submitted for the record follows.]

THE ASSOCIATION OF JUNIOR LEAGUES, INC.

August 11, 1989

The Honorable Dale Kildee
Chairman
Subcommittee on Human Resources
of the Committee on Education
and Labor
320 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Kildee:

The Association of Junior Leagues International, Inc., was pleased to attend the Subcommittee hearing on July 28 on the "Establishment of a National Policy on Children and Youth." We applaud your continued commitment to and support of programs for children and youth.

For more than 80 years, Junior Leagues have been involved in thousands of youth serving projects, ranging from shelters for runaways to volunteer career development projects. During the past year Junior Leagues provided more than eight million volunteer hours to various projects and public policy activities, many of them related to the needs of children and teenagers. Two such programs are Teen Outreach and Project LEAD (Leadership Experience And Development).

Project LEAD is an Association program in collaboration with the Quest National Center. This program, initiated in 1982, helps to cultivate leadership potential in a broad mix of high school students by training them to work in teams with adult mentors on volunteer projects that serve their communities. Project LEAD is an ongoing program that aspires to alleviate many of the educational, social and emotional problems that are being experienced by a growing number of the over 64 million Americans under the age of 18. Project LEAD is now underway in 19 states, including the state of Michigan.

Teen Outreach (TOP), initially developed in 1978, is a school-based teenage pregnancy prevention program designed to decrease the incidence of teenage pregnancy and to increase the number of at-risk teenagers who successfully complete their high school education. TOP helps adolescents see themselves as effective contributing members of their community by placing them as weekly volunteers in community agencies. Currently, there are 90 Teen

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Outreach Programs in middle schools and high schools throughout the country. Enclosed are more detailed fact sheets about each program which we hope you will consider including in the hearing record of July 28th.

The Association of Junior Leagues International, Inc., is an organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism and improving the community through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Today, there are 264 Junior Leagues in the United States with approximately 172,000 members.

The Association believes that there is a critical need for a national youth policy to address and to help alleviate many of the complex problems facing young people. We look forward to working with you and your staff to develop a national policy on youth and children.

Sincerely,

Judith B. Greenman

Judith B. Greenman
Second Vice President

Enclosures

TEEN OUTREACH

1. What Is Teen Outreach?

Teen Outreach (TOP) is a school-based teenage pregnancy prevention program designed to decrease the incidence of teenage pregnancy and to increase the number of at-risk teenagers who successfully complete their high school education. Teen Outreach helps adolescents see themselves as effective contributing members of their community by placing them as weekly volunteers in community agencies. In addition to their volunteer experience, teens of both sexes participate in weekly small group discussions led by a trained facilitator/teacher who guides them through a curriculum focusing on life management skills which encourage the students to learn to set goals for their future. An important part of TOP is the evaluation component that determines the effectiveness of the program. TOP was cited in a widely publicized report, Risking the Future: Adolescent Sexuality, Pregnancy and Childbearing, by the National Research Council as one of the few programs able to document its impact on preventing teen pregnancy and reducing the school dropout rate.

2. How Did It Begin?

In 1981, the Junior League of St. Louis, with the support of the Danforth Foundation, assumed a major role in promoting and funding Teen Outreach which had begun in 1978 in one city high school in St. Louis. In 1984, after an independent evaluation had demonstrated the success of the program, the Junior League of St. Louis, with the support of the Association of Junior Leagues, sought and was granted funding by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation to begin national replication of Teen Outreach for three years (1984-1987).

From the original eight Junior Leagues which initiated programs in 1984, Teen Outreach has now grown to a total of 26 cities in 1988-89 which are responsible for the implementation of over 71 local Teen Outreach programs in middle schools and high schools throughout the United States and Canada.

With continuing support from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation as well as the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund and other foundations, the Association of Junior Leagues and the American Association of School Administrators are joining forces in a three-year effort (1987-1990) to expand the replication of Teen Outreach to reach more adolescents at risk.

A project of
The Association of Junior Leagues in collaboration with The American Association of School Administrators

Association of Junior Leagues, Inc.
660 First Avenue
New York, New York 10016
212/683-1515

Funders
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Foundation

3. Which Communities Have Implemented Teen Outreach?

Abilene, TX
Baltimore, MD
Central & North Brevard, FL
Charleston, SC
Charlotte, NC
Chicago, IL
Cincinnati, OH
Cleveland, OH
Elizabeth-Plainfield, NJ
Eugene, OR
Greensboro, NC
Holyoke, MA
Madisonville, KY
Minneapolis, MN
Omaha, NE
Orlando-Winter Park, FL
Orange County, NY
Peoria, IL
Pittsburgh, PA
Providence, RI
Pueblo, CO
Rochester, NY
Salt Lake City, UT
San Diego, CA
St. Joseph, MO
Springfield, MA
Wilmington, DE
Winnipeg, MB
Yakima, WA

4. Has the Program Been Successful?

Results of an independent three year evaluation indicate that Teen Outreach students had better rates on all five indicators of program success--school enrollment, course failure, school suspension, pregnancy, and live births--than did comparison students from each local site. Teen Outreach students were significantly more likely than their local comparisons to be enrolled in school, to have graduated and to have stopped being suspended from school. Moreover, the 1986-87 data shows that those Teen Outreach students who showed good classroom attendance and who worked some volunteer hours, were significantly less likely to fail courses and to become teen parents than their comparisons.

FACT SHEET

Project Lead

Project LEAD (Leadership Experience And Development) is a program that helps to cultivate leadership potential in a broad mix of high school students by training them to work in teams with adult mentors on volunteer projects that serve their communities. Initiated in September 1982 by the Association of Junior Leagues in conjunction with the Quest National Center, the national demonstration stage was funded by a 40-month, $290,000 grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. After completing this phase, Project LEAD is now an established program which continues to grow. Currently underway is the planned transition of the project's administration to Quest International.

GOALS

At the heart of this project is the concept of adults providing support and guidance to youths as they work together for the benefit of their communities. Student leaders, in turn, are responsible for recruiting and guiding other young people as community leaders and volunteers. Project LEAD is an ongoing experience that aspires:

- To alleviate many of the educational, social, and emotional problems that are being experienced by a growing number of the 64 million Americans under the age of 18
- To encourage adults to share their knowledge and skills with youth and help them build self-esteem
- To develop a new source of much-needed volunteers among the young

PARTICIPANTS

Project LEAD is now underway in 19 states: Alabama, Arkansas, California, Florida, Indiana, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Texas, Virginia, Washington and West Virginia, as well as in Canada and Mexico. During 1985 it was extended to all Association areas, with volunteers from other community organizations and youth programs joining to form LEAD teams. Participating Junior Leagues are providing a cadre of adult volunteers to work with students, teachers, and other adult participants. A wide range of schools--urban and rural, public and private--as well as youth organizations and churches are in the program to make sure that it reaches those young people who are often bypassed by traditional opportunities: girls, the handicapped, minorities, and low-income youth. With local coordination by Junior Leagues, community-wide projects have been initiated in Battle Creek, Canton, Cincinnati, Fort Wayne, Indianapolis, Las Vegas, Mexico City, Norfolk-Virginia Beach, Pine Bluff, Pittsburgh and Edmonton, Canada. Area-wide models have been established in Birmingham, Michigan; Oakland-East Bay, San Francisco, and San Jose, California. In 1986 Project LEAD trainers provided training at the Air Force Academy for student leaders from Air Force Command Posts around the world.

(more)

THE ASSOCIATION OF JUNIOR LEAGUES, INC., 660 FIRST AVENUE, NY, NY 10016-3241

To date, the project has trained more than 1,850 young individuals and has involved more than 25,000 students. Five cities (Fort Wayne, Canton, Cincinnati, Indianapolis and Detroit) have institutionalized the project with the help of their United Way, local school system or university. The Junior League of Indianapolis fostered the spirit of internationalism by sponsoring a LEAD international conference concurrently with the Pan Am Games. A grant from the Lily Foundation to that League helped underwrite the expenses of the 104 participants from Canada, Mexico and the United States.

MODE OF OPERATION

LEAD is launched in each location with a one-day Implementation Workshop for adult leaders, preparing them to work effectively with young people and to explore ways to initiate projects in their communities. At a subsequent two-and-one-half day Leadership Conference, student leaders join the adult mentors. The adult/student teams receive training and extend their skills in community research, organizational management, communication and action planning.

On returning to their communities, LEAD teams plan and implement volunteer programs and advocacy efforts which address a community problem that has been identified through a needs assessment conducted by the students.

Some of the programs developed by LEAD teams in their communities include fostering better youth relations with the police, building an adobe shelter for the poorly housed, developing a Community Help Center, launching a food bank, establishing intergenerational projects with senior citizens, setting up programs to deal with teenage pregnancy and drug abuse.

AJL AND YOUTH

The Association of Junior Leagues is a women's international voluntary organization of 273 Leagues and more than 180,000 members. For more than 80 years, the Junior Leagues have been involved in thousands of youth-serving projects, ranging from shelters for runaways to volunteer career development projects. During the past year more than eight million volunteer hours were devoted to 1,928 projects, and 730 public policy activities, many of them related to the needs of children and teenagers.

For more information, call: The Association of Junior Leagues, Inc.
(212) 683-1515

Quest International
(800) 233-7900
(800) 446-2700, Ohio
(614) 882-6400, Alaska and Hawaii

7/88

STATEMENT OF

THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

ON A NATIONAL POLICY ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

JULY 28, 1989

10:00 A.M.

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES

THE HONORABLE DALE KILDEE, CHAIRMAN

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, the American Association of School Administrators, the organization representing the more than 18,000 local superintendents and school executives on whose behalf I am testifying today, thanks you for giving those of us who actually operate local schools an opportunity to present our views on the establishment of a National Policy on Children and Youth. We are grateful for the leadership you have shown for education over the years, and particularly this year in your work on the Budget Committee.

Earlier this year, after the President announced his education initiatives, we respectfully suggested that his initiatives are incomplete. As they now stand, they represent the icing on a cake that has not yet been baked.

The states are already addressing the ideas in the President's proposal. The national need to address the burgeoning number of poor children, children born drug addicted, and children who lack quality child care is not addressed by the President or as yet by Congress. It is the National problems of children that AASA submits should be added to the President's education plan; indeed, they should be addressed in a National Policy on Children.

It is a disgrace that in 1989 family income is still the best predictor of a child's life opportunities and educational achievement. AASA would like to issue a call to sever the connection between income and opportunity.

The Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services currently administer a handful of powerful, existing programs--programs that we know deliver solid results for children--but which are not having the impact they should, because of a lack of federal dollar commitment.

The AASA Committee on Federal Policy and Legislation clearly established our position on this issue in January when it stated that the federal government should "fully fund existing educational programs," before any new programs are created.

You and colleagues have the opportunity, through this legislation, to make sure that the commitment to disadvantaged young people, to the federal role of promoting equity and equality in education, is carried to fruition. It is a goal to which we all aspire, but the attainment of which is frustrated by the explosive growth of spending on defense, entitlements and interest payments on the national debt, and the concomitant shrinking, under Gramm/Rudman/Hollings, of federal discretionary spending. I ask you to recall that there are no entitlements for poor or handicapped young children in education; every nickle of elementary and secondary education funding is discretionary.

You can take an historic step toward accomplishing the goal of reaching those children, whose future is our economy's only hope, by creating a Children's Trust into which could be invested funds from a dedicated tax for education, and out of which could flow the funds necessary to fully fund Head Start, the Chapter 1 program of compensatory education for disadvantaged children, the Education for All Handicapped program, health care programs for children, and any new federal child care initiative.

The specifics of the Trust obviously would have to be negotiated between this Committee and the Ways and Means Committee. We believe that funds for the

Trust should derive from a permanent, progressive tax, the revenue from which would be dedicated to the Trust, much like Social Security and its tax.

Given that the public consistently states in national polls that it is willing to pay more taxes for education--and that Illinois, a state with a Republican governor and a legislature controlled by Democrats, recently approved an income tax increase with revenues dedicated to education and local government--we believe a small increase in the income tax, generating $25 to $30 billion per year for the Trust, is politically achievable. We also believe that this Committee is the body that can most readily make the case for the Children's Trust to your colleagues, since you are the guardians of programs serving the most vulnerable and valuable members of our society. You know that if we fail now to invest in them, we will have no future.

The Children's Trust--as we have sketchily outlined here and as Washington State Secretary of Social and Health Services Jule Sugarman has proposed in far greater detail--would have several key elements:

First, it would be an acknowledgement of the long-term partnership that exists on behalf of children between federal, state and local government.

Second, it would be based on an earmarked revenue source.

Third, it would create a network of programs designed to sever the crippling connection that now exists in our society between opportunity and family income.

Fourth, it would provide a basis for expanding child care to all families wishing to participate.

What we offer, Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, is a modest proposal. What our nation faces, if we continue to ignore the demographic profile of the children in whom we must invest to expand our economy and keep our factories running, is a certain slippage to second or third class economic status.

For the sake of our nation, for the sake of our children we urge you to approve legislation creating a Children's Trust.

TESTIMONY OF FRAN PRATT

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR UNDERSTANDING AGING, INC.

to the

SUB-COMMITEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

regarding the

YOUNGER AMERICANS ACT (HR1492)

August 5, 1989

TESTIMONY RE: THE YOUNGER AMERICANS ACT (HR1492)
August 5, 1989

Last year the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U. S. Department of Education, published a report entitled: "Youth Indicators, 1988: Trends in the Well-Being of American Youth." (1) The cover of the 135-page report is attractively illustrated with a series of black silhouette drawings of high school students showing their progress through the educational system. There are scenes of students socializing, practicing a musical instrument, engrossed in their studies, peering into a microscope, and finally, clad in a graduation gown with hard-won diploma in hand, leaping into the air with the joy of successfully fininishing the course. It all makes a very pretty picture.

On opening the book, however, one soon finds a very different picture emerging. Page after page, with numerous statistical graphs and tables, the book documents the growing plight of young Americans and their families. Instead of purporting to be a report on the "Well-Being of American Youth," the book might be better titled: "A Report on the Stagnation and Failure of Public Policy toward Families and Children." Avoiding the tedium of a barrage of statistics in favor of a few rounded off numbers, these are some of the trends reported:

1. Marriage and Divorce:
   While there has been a steady decline in the rate of first marriages for single women since 1960, there has been a steady annual rise in divorces from under 400,000 in 1950 to well over 1,000,000 in the 1980s. The number of children involved in divorces has climbed proportionately. (pp. 8 -11)
2. Births to Unmarried Women:
   Teenage pregnancy has risen markedly, and abortion rates have more than doubled since 1972. The rate of births to unmarried women climbed about 60% between 1950 and 1985, both for teenagers and for women in their twenties. (pp. 14-15 and 96-97)
3. Living Arrangements:
   Although the average number of children per couple has declined since 1950, the number of children living in single-parent families (mostly headed by women) quadrupled between 1950 and 1985. (pp. 18-23)
4. Family Income and Expenses:
   Measured in constant 1986 dollars, median family income shows a modest improvement for families in general from 1970 to 1986, but an actual decline for Black families and hardly any improvement for Hispanic families in the same period. Any gains in family income have been outstripped by such rising costs as medical care, housing, and education. Even excluding the cost of child care, when available, it now costs close to $100,000 to raise a single child from birth to the age of 18. Given a basically stagnant income situation and rising family expenses, it should come as no surprise that by 1985 there were about 40% more children living in poverty than there were in 1960. Consequently, the number of families relying on AFDC has virtually skyrocketed over the past two decades. (pp. 26-31 and 42-43)

Testimony re: Younger Americans Act, p. 2

5. Education:

While there have been modest improvements in certain aspects of education such as the percentage of young people enrolled, years of school completed, and performance in some academic areas, there are still major areas of concern. For example, in 1985 only half of all high school graduates with less than two years of postsecondary education would be able to locate information in a news article, match money-saving coupons to a shopping list, balance a checkbook, or use a map. (pp. 48-67)

6. Substance Abuse:

High school seniors have self-reported a decline in the use of alcohol, marijuana, heroin and LSD from 1975 to 1986, but they have also reported a more than threefold increase in the use of cocaine during the same period. (pp. 98-99)

7. Causes of Death:

Accidents (especially in motor vehicles) continue to be the highest cause of death for teenagers, but homicide and suicide have climbed sharply since 1960 as major causes of death among young people ages 15 to 19. For non-white males of that age, deaths from homicide were more than five times as common as they were for white youths of the same age.

If these are "Youth Indicators" as we approach the 21st century, Americans of all ages must be concerned about what the future will hold when today's young people reach maturity. What we have is not a report on the "well-being of American Youth," but a report of tragedy.

The grim situation represented by this report, and by many other reports on young people and their families today, does not so much represent the failure of public policy as it does the absence of policy. Although we have a proliferation of specific state and federal family programs and services, each targeted to a particular category of people or need, the United States lacks a coherent and unified national policy on families and youth. It is for this reason that I personally, and the national membership of the Center for Understanding Aging, Inc., which I serve as Executive Director, enthusiastically support the enactment of the "Younger Americans Act." The bill would mandate the first White House Conference on Children to determine priorities for national policy. Establishment of an Administration on Children, Youth and Families within the Department of Health and Human Services, also provided in the bill, would accomplish the purpose of having one central agency through which family policy could be coordinated. We see this as perhaps the most important piece of legislation before the Congress this year, and one of the greatest opportunities for overcoming the problems that face millions of families today and in the future.

It is a matter of history that a similar bold piece of legislation, the Older Americans Act, passed in 1965, has virtually transformed the lives of millions of elderly people in the United States. While there remain all too many elderly people who live in or near the brink of poverty, the overall picture since passage of the Older Americans Act has been one of progress and improvement in the quality of life for the great majority of elderly people. The

improvement of their economic situation and well-being has averted much of the personal and financial strain that would have been placed on younger generations of their families, and allowed them the dignity of greater independence and control over their lives.

It is now time, and in fact long past time, to take the same kind of bold steps on behalf of families and youth. Among experts and non-experts alike, it is no secret that a stable and wholesome family life is one of the most important factors in creating young people who will succeed in their education and careers, abide by the law, and become responsible adult citizens. But faced with so many contemporary economic and social pressures working against them, young people and their families must have support. We can only speculate about how many unplanned teen pregnancies, how many divorces and family separations, how many drug addictions, how many crimes by and against youth, how many infant mortalities, how many deaths from child abuse might have been prevented had the families involved had the kinds of financial and other support they needed in times of crisis.

What we do not have to speculate about is the enormous costs these problems present to the American taxpayer. When a mother who cannot afford prenatal care at a cost of $600 gives birth to a low weight baby, the average cost of intensive care is $18,000. (The national cost of neonatal intensive care for high-risk babies is $1.5 billion.) When a teenager enters a juvenile detention center, the cost to the taxpayer is $27,000 per year. If incarcerated as an adult, costs ranges from $40,000 to $65,000 per year. Currently the total state and federal prison population of more than 600,000 inmates is at an all time high and growing. (2) There are other costs about which we cannot be so specific. For example, if school drop outs and illiteracy continue at their present rate, what will it cost us to have a future work force unable to perform the work required by the technology of the 21st century? How much in the way of tax revenues will come from these workers (or non-workers?) if the only jobs they can hold down are jobs paying minimum wages?

Funds invested directly in education may be largely wasted if the family environments from which students come are not conducive to learning. When half the new jobs created in the last decade were at wages below the poverty level for a family of four, it is not hard to understand why, even in two parent families, over four million children each day return from school to an empty house. (3) How conducive to learning can the family environment be for these "latch key" children? What kind of family environment can there be for the 800,000 people currently on the waiting list for public housing? (4) Life in homeless shelters, the back seats of cars or tents staked out in campgrounds is hardly the kind of environment that will produce students eager to learn.

Today there is a lot of talk about scarce resources and tight budgets. Yet the United States Government has found it possible over the past few years to pour $22.5 billion into development of a stealth bomber which, if it ever becomes operational, may allow us the luxury of penetrating Soviet air space after an all-out nuclear missile attack. In the face of public outcry over the cost of the B-2 bomber, and numerous claims by military experts that the weapon

can never serve any useful purpose, Congress reduced expenditures on the stealth bomber, yet the spending goes on. Today, in spite of "scarce resources," we hear that the administration contemplates the investment of many more billions of dollars to place astronauts on the face of Mars. In the light of these, and countless, other examples we might give, it is obvious that our dilemma is not one of too little money; it is simply a question of priorities.

Another argument often heard today is that the shortage of funds for programs and services to young people is due to over-spending on services to elderly people. To support their argument, "generational equity" proponents often use misleading statistics. For example, when reporting on how much is spent for older people, they include the cost of Social Security benefits, in spite of the fact that Social Security is an entirely self-supporting system that has never added one cent to the federal deficit. In fact, the current federal deficit of approximately $150 billion would be more like $200 billion dollars were it not for the Social Security Trust Funds. (5) Questions about fairness to young people, raised by Americans for Generational Equity (self-proclaimed advocates for youth with no representation by any major organization representing young people), only serve to divert attention from the waste of billions of dollars on programs that we don't need while attempting to pit advocates for old and young against each other. A national survey conducted by the Daniel Yankelovich Group for the American Association of Retired Persons demonstrates clearly that "inter-generational tension" between young and old is far more imagined than real. (6) What the survey makes clear is that Americans of all ages are strongly committed to present programs for older people, but also to setting new government priorities that would benefit both young and old. Jack Ossofsky, the former Executive Director of the National Council on the Aging, very aptly summed up the so-called "generational equity" issue when he said: "There is no intergenerational warfare, only warmongers." (7)

The membership of the Center for Understanding Aging is fully persuaded that the question of adequate support for American elders and youth is not an "either/or" proposition. It is for this reason that we became a charter member of Generations United, a coalition of more than 100 national organizations committed to advocating for the needs of all generations, and have consistently supported their advocacy for the Younger Americans Act. The future of the American family, and especially of the young, is the common future for all of us, regardless of age. In the words of Charles Kettering, "We should all be concerned about the future, because we will spend the rest of our lives there."

Respectfully submitted by:
Fran Pratt, Exec. Director
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(References Attached)

REFERENCES

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Testimony of Iowa State Senator Charles Bruner

Hearing on the Establishment of a National Policy
on Children and Youth

Subcommittee on Human Resources
Committee on Education and Labor
U.S. House of Representatives

July 28, 1989

My name is Charles Bruner, and I have served for eleven years as a state legislator for the state of Iowa, where I have focused most of my legislative attention on child welfare and family welfare issues. I currently chair the Senate Human Services Appropriations Committee and serve as vice-chair of the Senate Human Resources Committee. I chair the National Conference of State Legislature's Child Support Advisory Committee and serve on its Children, Families, and Social Services Committee. I hold a Ph.D. in political science from Stanford University and have written a variety of articles and books on public policy formation. Currently, I am the Director of a newly-formed Child and Family Policy Center that seeks to link the research community with the policy-making community in developing state child and family policy.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony before this subcommittee on this most important issue. I say this for two reasons. First, I believe there is a lack of integration of policy initiatives at the federal level on child and family issues that impedes policy formation and implementation at the state and local level. Second, I believe there are promising initiatives to address many pressing youth concerns that could form the basis of a federal child and youth policy and toward which state and local efforts could be directed.

Although I do not speak in this testimony on behalf of the National Conference of State Legislatures, I share with that organization the belief that the Young Americans Act (H.R. 1492) would represent a significant step by Congress to establishing a national policy on children and youth and a greater recognition of the importance to the nation of addressing youth concerns.

With respect to my first point on the lack of integration of policy initiatives at the federal level on child and family policy, I will provide two illustrations.

The first of these relates to the separate federal actions and proposed actions on welfare reform and on child care.

On child care generally, woven into most Congressional proposals are child care tax credits designed in large part to provide low-income parents with young children greater choice so that a spouse can afford to stay at home with the children rather than to be forced, out of economic necessity, to work. On the provision of child care itself, the Senate-passed ABC legislation emphasizes quality in child care arrangements, as do other Congressional initiatives designed to expand pre-school programs for low-income children.

Meanwhile, however, the Family Support Act requires single-parent heads-of-households with children age three or older (and, at state discretion, age six months or older) to engage in out-of-home employment or training, if child care is available. No standards are applied to the quality of this care. Child care is treated solely as a necessary adjunct to employment.

The federal policy initiatives on welfare reform and on child care thus exist in some contradiction to one another. They suggest that society should provide economic alternatives to two-parent families to allow one parent to stay at home to raise the children while at the same time directing single-parent families to go into the workforce full-time to serve both as "parent" and "breadwinner." (Under the structure of the AFDC program, with its time-limited earned income disregard, there is no economic incentive for a single parent to balance these roles through part-time employment.)

Nationally, there are over three million children aged zero to five living in families served by the AFDC program, nearly 15 % of all pre-school aged children. By contrast, AFDC nonworking adults in households with no children under age three (those adults targeted by the Family Support Act for services leading to employment) represent less than 2 % of the current U.S. workforce. For the long-term well-being of our society, it may be much more important what happens developmentally for young children in AFDC families than what happens with respect to their parents' immediate employment. Yet the Family Support Act emphasizes employment as the solution to AFDC family needs and ignores the family and child development needs of such families, despite the fact that most of these families are under substantial stress due to poverty and to single parenting and despite the fact that other federal efforts on child care and Head Start seem to point in the opposite direction.

The purpose of these observations is not to condemn the Family Support Act, but rather to point out that it (and all programs that deal so directly with the family) should be developed in the larger context of family and child development. A national policy on children and youth would help assure that such a context exists.

My second example of the lack of policy integration relates to federal drug policy, which appears to be debated almost exclusively as a law enforcement issue. The "supply side" focus upon interdiction, prosecution, and incarceration ignores "demand side" issues related to youth employment opportunities and community and family support systems. While no youth are immune from the dangers of drugs, youth in some communities are at much greater risk than youth in other communities to exposure to drugs, drug experimentation and abuse, and youth gang involvement. I believe this risk is principally related to the absence of other youth outlets, options, and opportunities. I believe government's response to drugs first and foremost should be a response to youth and their needs. The development of a national policy on children and youth would help highlight this point, and more appropriately focus public resources directed to combatting drugs.

On my second point, that there are promising initiatives to address many pressing youth concerns that could form the basis of a federal child and youth policy, I would like simply to refer to the two attached reports. The first outlines program initiatives at the state level taking a "family support and education" approach. The second outlines a number of collaborative efforts at the state level to address the concerns of youth and families. My background is that of a state legislator, so these papers discuss state initiatives, where I do feel much of the program innovation has occurred. It is important to recognize, however, that the initiatives outlined provide substantial flexibility to communities in the development and implementation of actual program models. Federal initiatives must recognize the same needs for flexibility as state initiatives, coupled with rigorous evaluation of program outcomes.

Lisbeth Schorr's book, Within Our Reach, has outlined a number of exemplary programs addressing children and family needs across a wide range of child developmental ages (prenatal, infant, preschool, preadolescent, adolescent) and a wide range of professional specializations (health, education, social work, employment training). She has identified common elements among these successful programs that begin with the ability to focus upon the whole child in the context of his or her family and community support systems. I believe the true challenge for government will be to find ways to transport these successful programs from one location to another, including the development of a team leadership structure to make this transfer a success.

Federal policy impacts upon children and families in many and far-reaching ways. It does so through federal policies directly affecting families, and through federal programs that the states administer. A greater focus on children and youth in national policy formation is long overdue. It is easy to give lip service

to "children representing out most precious resource." It is more difficult, but crucial, to give actual meaning to that phrase. As the Older Americans Act focused attention and resources on our nation's senior citizens, a Young Americans Act could do the same for our youth.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS RETAINED IN SUBCOMMITTEE FILES.

NATIONAL
GOVERNORS
ASSOCIATION

August 9, 1989

The Honorable Dale E. Kildee
Chairman
Subcommittee on Human Resources
320 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-6106

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I appreciate the opportunity to share with you the views of the nation's Governors in developing a national policy on children. The Governors believe that the need to invest in an array of quality prevention programs for children is one of the central issues we face as a society dependent for our common future on the well-being of our young people. In recent years, the Governors have tackled the question of investment initiatives ranging from their five-year education reform initiative that began with the 1986 publication Time for Results, to their 1987 report on American prosperity, Making America Work, to their three-year project on early childhood, Focus on the First Sixty Months.

These studies reaffirm the Governors' belief that a national children's policy is a sound investment in the nation's future. The economic and social well-being of the nation rests on our ability to ensure that our children develop into healthy, well-educated and productive citizens. Prevention and early intervention programs are critical in assisting children.

The Governors believe that a national policy on children should be based on the following principles to guide the development and improvement of state services to children:

Access: Parents and others seeking governmental assistance on behalf of their children should have timely access to services, the opportunity to choose among available services, and voice in their design, development and delivery.

Economic Security: More than 12 million American children live in poverty. Providing a minimum income level sufficient to provide some basic level of food, shelter, transportation, clothing and

health care through employment or income security or child support programs, is an essential step to ensuring family stability and healthy child development. States should continue to support the development of a national income security policy in accordance with the principles of eligibility based solely on need, adequate benefit levels, equitable treatment across state lines, incentives for self support and full federal financial responsibility for a basic set of benefits.

Health: Overall, the health status of American children has improved dramatically over the last two decades. Yet, the percentage of poor children covered by Medicaid has fallen dramatically in the past decade, from 66 percent in 1976 to 49 percent by 1986. Our country ranks 19th among the industrial countries in the world in its effort to combat infant mortality. The Governors strongly support a policy that would allow states the option to expand Medicaid eligibility to all children up to age 18 with incomes below the federal poverty level. Greater coordination between the health programs targeted to pregnant women and children -- Medicaid, Maternal and Child Health Block Grant and the Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children -- is also needed.

Education and Child Development: The federal government has played a key role in helping states provide special educational services for economically disadvantaged and handicapped children. Yet, there is still a need for increased federal support for educating poor and disabled children and a strong federal commitment to civil rights enforcement and equal educational opportunity for children and youth. Regarding child development programs, states need continued assistance in developing and improving their early preventive measures for disadvantaged children. The social and economic costs of delaying assistance in preschool child development programs are high.

Child Care: Quality child care influences the health and well-being of the nation's children and expanding the supply of affordable quality child care is an integral part of the Governors' efforts to reform the welfare system and to move families from poverty to economic self-sufficiency. Child care policy must strike a balance between a tax credit and a grant program to comprehensively address the issues of supply, quality and affordability. The Governors support a grant program that will give states the flexibility they need to improve and expand quality child care programs.

Homelessness and Housing: Homeless families with children are now the fastest growing portion of the homeless population. For too

many children, a homeless shelter or welfare hotel is the only home they have ever known. In addition to the psychological effects of being without a safe and secure home, homeless children often do not attend school regularly, may suffer from inadequate health care and poor nutrition, and can too easily become involved in alcohol and drug abuse and crime. The Governors believe that our goal must be to eliminate shelters as a way of life. This can occur by expanding and preserving the permanent supply of affordable and decent housing and targeting slots in federally subsidized housing to those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Housing programs should also be coordinated with service providers to ensure that homeless persons entering permanent housing receive the necessary supports.

States are experimenting with new approaches for the development and implementation of comprehensive prevention initiatives for children and their families. While often operating under broad federal guidelines or through national entitlement and block grant programs, states currently play a major role in funding and administering programs for children. Successful children's programs require the coordination of a wide variety of services, beginning at the policy development stage and continuing through implementation. Federal children's policy must be designed to complement state and local policy and programs.

The Governors believe that federal initiatives should be designed so they do not shift the costs of current federal programs to the states or force states to assume additional costs of meeting federal objectives through unfunded mandates. Further, consolidation is needed so states can better coordinate programs, reduce administrative costs, and establish priorities that accurately reflect state and local needs and prevention goals.

The federal government can lead by developing a coherent national strategy to support families and their children. Congress must look beyond the traditional jurisdictional lines found within its committee structure to set an example of national coordinated planning. It is essential that federal, state and local governments and the private sector focus attention and leadership on investing in the country's most valuable resource — its children. The Governors are committed to work with you in this important effort.

Sincerely,

Raymond C. Scheppach
Executive Director

Enclosures

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